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France recalls representative from Baghdad

PARIS (AFP) — France recalled its official representative in Iraq "for consultations" Tuesday while sending a firm message of disapproval about Baghdad's decision to halt cooperation with U.N. weapons inspectors. The French reprimand was seen as significant in view of Paris' past efforts to seek a way out of the eight-year impasse with Iraq since the imposition of United Nations sanctions following the Gulf war. French foreign ministry spokeswoman Anne Gazeau-Secret said France had informed the Iraqi authorities it was recalling the head of its interests section in Baghdad, Yves Aubin de la Messuziere, for consultations. Aubin de la Messuziere, meanwhile, handed Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz a letter from French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine underlining the "gravity" of Baghdad's decision last week to stop cooperating with UNSCOM.

Tarawneh receives Spanish minister, Saudi ambassador

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh on Tuesday received Spanish Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and the European Affairs Ramon de Miguel and discussed with him scopes of cooperation between Jordan and Spain, particularly in economic fields. Also discussed were the latest developments in the Middle East region, particularly the Middle East peace process following the Wye River agreement between Israelis and Palestinians. They also discussed the Spanish and European roles in the peace process and the need to pool efforts to achieve a just, durable and comprehensive peace in the region. On the other hand, the prime minister received Saudi Ambassador to Jordan Abdullah Sudairi and discussed with him bilateral relations.

Iraq gears up for 'last battle'; U.S. gauges military support

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq geared up for its "last battle" over U.N. weapons inspections and sanctions on Tuesday as U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen held talks with British officials and warned that "all options remain open."

Cohen, in London to consult with Britain over Iraq's latest defiance of U.N. arms inspections, met with British Defence Minister George Robertson, a British defence ministry spokesman said.

The two agreed that "Saddam Hussein must be clear that all options remain open," he said. "They agreed that Saddam Hussein's refusal to cooperate is unacceptable and has been unanimously condemned by the Security Council."

In New York, the Security Council was due to meet to discuss its response to the latest face-off with Baghdad, following its decision Saturday to halt all cooperation with weapons inspectors.

In Iraq, newspapers screamed the sanctions-hit state's defiance, saying this would be the "last battle" to secure the lifting of the crippling U.N. sanctions imposed eight years ago.

"The decision for this last battle had to be taken... to start breaking the embargo," said Al Iraq.

The newspapers laid the blame for the stand-off squarely on the United States and Israel, which they accused of orchestrating U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) spying missions and deliberately prolonging the sanctions.

Babel, a daily run by President Saddam's son Uday, said the United States had agents "at every level" of UNSCOM in charge of disarming Iraq.

Their only aim was "to prolong the embargo," which cannot be lifted until UNSCOM certifies the elimination of Iraq's banned weapons of mass destruction, it said.

The Iraqi ambassador to the United Nations, Nizar Hamdoun, told the BBC on Tuesday the decision to block UNSCOM was a protest over the effects of the sanctions and that Arab states were unlikely to back any U.S. military action.

"Iraq has taken its decision out of frustration and because of the continuous needless deaths that we are suffering. Over 6,000 children a month are dying because of the impact of the sanctions," he said.

Iraq held a mass funeral in Baghdad on Tuesday for 50 children it said had died because of medical and food shortages caused by the sanctions. "They died because of the embargo," said a banner carried by a family in tears.

Another charged that "America is killing children," in reference to Washington's hard line against a lifting of sanctions.

On Sunday, Cohen warned that while Washington prefers a diplomatic solution, military strikes have "always been an option that we could pursue."

U.S. President Bill Clinton said Monday that until the arms experts are "back on the job, no options are off the table."

Meanwhile, Security Council members on Tuesday were expected to discuss a draft resolution responding to statements by UNSCOM chief Richard Butler that weapons monitoring and inspections in Iraq had come to a "complete halt."

Western diplomats told AFP the draft resolution was likely to reflect Saturday's unanimous condemnation of Iraq's latest decision as "a flagrant violation of relevant council resolutions."

Butler on Tuesday said: "I can't second guess what they'll decide but I do know that they are pretty determined that this shouldn't be left to stand and Iraq should be brought into compliance."

He rejected Iraqi demands for his resignation, saying such a move "wouldn't change anything."

Draft resolution demands rescinding of Iraq decision

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Britain on Tuesday circulated a draft resolution demanding the reversal of an Iraqi decision halting cooperation with U.N. arms inspectors.

But the draft resolution, which is under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter providing for enforcement measures, refrains from threatening military action.

The draft resolution, obtained by AFP, "demands that Iraq rescind immediately and unconditionally" its decision last Saturday halting all cooperation with the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) tasked with Iraqi disarmament.

The draft "condemns" the Iraqi decision as "a flagrant violation of resolution 687 and other relevant resolutions."

Resolution 687 put an end to the 1991 Gulf war and established UNSCOM.

The short draft, which was to be discussed by the 15-member U.N. Security Council later Tuesday, also reiterates the council's call for Iraq to rescind an Aug. 5 decision suspending cooperation with both UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The text reaffirms the council's full support for UNSCOM and the IAEA in their efforts to "ensure the implementation of their mandates under the relevant resolutions of the council."

It reaffirms in legally binding form the content of a press statement issued by the council on Saturday after Iraq announced that it was ceasing cooperation.

The Security Council is offering Iraq a "comprehensive review" of the sanctions if Baghdad rescinds its decision severing cooperation with the weapons inspectors.

Since Aug. 5, Iraq has prohibited UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) from carrying out inspections of new sites, but allowed monitoring operations at military and industrial facilities.

On Tuesday, Iraq allowed UNSCOM technicians to carry out technical work at one site. The IAEA meanwhile has been allowed to continue its monitoring work.



An Israeli settler armed with an Uzi submachine gun and a walkie-talkie on Tuesday provides security for an earthmover which continues to clear land at a new Jewish settlement in Ras Al Amoud neighbourhood of Arab east Jerusalem. Six Israelis from the 'Peace Now' movement were arrested when they interfered with the earthmover as protests over the settlement continue. Work at the settlement site had been frozen for the past 14 months but began directly after Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu returned from the Wye peace meetings in Washington (Reuters photo)

Palestinians will not change security plan

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Palestinians will not add to the security document that they have already submitted to U.S. diplomats as part of their commitments under the Wye River accord, a senior official said on Tuesday.

"The security files which have been agreed upon and have been closed will not be reopened," said Mohammad Dahlan, the head of internal security in the Gaza Strip.

"We continue to be surprised at the positions that [Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin] Netanyahu comes up with from time to time, the most recent of which was his claim that the Palestinian security plan does not address one of the issues," Dahlan said.

"The least that can be said of this claim is that it is not correct," Dahlan told AFP.

"From our side, we have closed all the security files and we have made clear all our commitments to the Americans and even Israeli security officials. Netanyahu knows that we will not revisit any of the issues," he said.

Netanyahu on Tuesday postponed a meeting of the cabinet called to ratify the 11-day old Wye River agreement because, he said, a document detailing Palestinian security commitments delivered on Monday failed to address one crucial issue.

The Israeli prime minister said that if Israel did not receive further commitments from the Palestinians on the outstanding issue he would not hold the cabinet meeting.

Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai said after meeting PLO number two Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) and Dahlan in Gaza that the missing element in the security document related to the arrest of 30 known killers of Israelis who are living in Palestinian-controlled territory.

The delay on the Israeli side comes despite apparent U.S. satisfaction with the Palestinian document.

"The necessary [security] plans were provided on time by the Palestinians," State Department spokesman James Rubin told journalists on Monday.

Another senior Palestinian official said that by delaying the cabinet meeting, Netanyahu was reverting to former habits of finding ways to hold up the peace process.

"It seems that Netanyahu is returning to his old ways which we thought he had got over in the Wye Plantation agreement," International Cooperation Minister Nabil Shaath told AFP.

"This is a fresh retreat by Netanyahu and a reversion to his old ways — destroying confidence instead of building it up," Shaath said.

"I hope that there will not be [more] of this behaviour in the coming days so that we can get the peace process back on its natural track," he added.

'Yassin under house arrest for his own protection'

CAIRO (AFP) — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has placed Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) founder Sheikh Ahmad Yassin under house arrest to "protect" him against a possible Israeli attack, the Palestinian delegate to the Arab League said on Tuesday.

"Sheikh Yassin is surrounded by security measures to protect him against a cowardly act by Israeli agents," delegate Mohammad Sobeih told reporters at league headquarters in Cairo.

Yasser Arafat's PNA ordered the house arrest of Yassin on Thursday and arrested dozens of Hamas activists after an Israeli soldier was killed in a suicide bombing in Gaza.

Yassin was freed by the Israeli authorities in October 1997 after spending eight years in Israeli jails.

PNA asks foreign journalists to register

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Foreign journalists trying to enter the Gaza Strip must register in advance with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), a Palestinian official said Tuesday, confirming the new regulations.

The Haaretz daily said the new rules were aimed at restricting contacts between the foreign media and the Islamist group Hamas. Haaretz, quoting a official, said that as part of the registration process, journalists would have to say whom they planned to interview during their stay in Gaza.

Mohammad Adwan, head of the PNA's press department, confirmed that foreign journalists would have to register, but denied that this was part of an effort to restrict coverage. "We just want to know who enters our areas," Adwan told the Associated Press.

The Foreign Press Association in Israel protested against the regulations, saying that they have "a suffocating effect on freedom of the press and hence are totally unacceptable."

The protest was delivered in a FPA letter to Tayyeb Abdul Rahim, the secretary general of the PNA.

Despite Adwan's assurances, there have been several incidents in recent days in which Palestinian security agents tried to restrict coverage of senior Hamas figures.

Armed Palestinian officers have been patrolling the home of Hamas founder Sheik Ahmad Yassin and have turned away journalists trying to get near his home.

Yassin was placed under house arrest last Thursday, in response to a Hamas suicide attack on an Israeli convoy in the Gaza Strip.

Security agents have also tried to interfere with attempts by journalists to interview Yassin's neighbours. In one incident last Friday, an armed plain-clothes agent ordered an Associated Press reporter out of Yassin's neighbourhood.

Man confesses to killing 8-month-old daughter

By Rana Husseini

AMMAN — Police are questioning a 53-year-old father who is suspected of killing his eight-month-old daughter following a domestic dispute in the Gaza refugee camp near Jerash on Friday, according to official sources.

The infant's body was ordered exhumed on Saturday for an autopsy by the criminal prosecutor after fresh evidence indicated that the child might have been killed, according to one source.

"The child's mother complained to police that her daughter was killed after being assaulted by her husband," the source told the Jordan Times Tuesday evening.

The source added that the father confessed to beating the child following a dispute with his wife, and that he did not intend to kill his daughter."

The official said financial burdens, disputes between the husband and wife on the night of the incident and the fact that the father had only three daughters and no sons were the reasons behind the assault on the child.

The source said that preliminary examination by police surgeons indicated that the infants head "was slammed against a solid surface and that she died of head injuries," the source said.

According to the source, the final autopsy result will be released soon by the medical officials.

Police declined comment and said they were investigating the incident.

Meanwhile, a two-year-old girl admitted to Al Bashir Hospital in Amman on October 20 after her throat was allegedly slashed by her 66-year-old father is reported to be in stable condition, officials said.

The child was reportedly assaulted by her father while she was sleeping "because he wanted to take revenge on his third wife following a quarrel."

The source told the Jordan Times Tuesday evening that the child's situation is improving and she has passed the critical stage.

Palestinian official: Iran funds and trains militants trying to kill Arafat

RAMALLAH (AP) — Palestinian security forces have in recent months foiled Iranian-backed attempts by Islamic militants to assassinate Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and senior members of his government, a senior Arafat aide said Tuesday.

Iran is training and funding a secret cell within the Islamic militant group Hamas to carry out the assassinations and suicide bombings in Israel, Tayyeb Abdul Rahim, the secretary general of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), told the Associated Press.

"We arrested several of these people who had plans detailing the assassinations," Abdul Rahim said.

The most recent arrest came in October when Palestinian intelligence agents arrested a Hamas activist, Jamal Natche, in the West Bank town of Hebron. Natche was given orders by Iran to kill Arafat, Abdul Rahim said, but did not provide details.

In a sharply worded leaflet, Hamas denied that it was receiving money from Iran. "Those who are cooperating with the enemy should remain silent," the leaflet said in a reference to the PNA's pledge as part of the new peace agreement to crack down on Hamas and to try and prevent terror attacks against Israelis.

Hamas, which has carried out more than a dozen suicide bombings in Israel since 1994, said the attacks would continue.

"Hamas renews its commitment to the Palestinian people to continue the holy war and resistance against our occupiers," the leaflet said.

A Hamas leader, Ismail Hanieh, said that more than 300 supporters of the group have been rounded up since last Thursday's suicide attack on an Israeli convoy in the Gaza Strip. Palestinian official have put the number of detainees at more than 100.

Hanieh said the dialogue between Hamas and the PNA has resumed. Hanieh said he met Monday with Palestinian intelligence officials and demanded that all detainees be freed. He said the security officials did not give an immediate response.

Israeli MPs accuse Netanyahu of cheating over Wye agreement

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Right-wing and Labour MPs accused Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu's government Tuesday of deceiving them by claiming Israel has secured commitments from the Palestinians it has not.

They also accused the government of intentionally misleading them by inserting commitments in the Hebrew translation of the Wye memorandum that do not exist in the original English text.

"The government is behaving in a fraudulent manner by trying to present the Wye memorandum as if it has achieved things it clearly has not," said Dan Meridor, a member of the foreign affairs and defence committee from Netanyahu's Likud Party.

The committee met after receiving a Hebrew version of the Wye agreement from government secretary Danny Naveh. "The translation is negligent and deceitful," said Meridor.

"The government secretary gave us a [translated] document which is an insult to intelligence," said Haim Ramon, a member of the committee from the opposition Labour Party.

Yossi Beilin of Labour, one of the architects of the 1993 Oslo agreement, said the Hebrew version misrepresents some important sections of the agreement.

Beilin said, for example, that according to the Hebrew version, the Palestinian National Council, the highest PLO body, is obliged to cancel the Palestinian Charter, but the English text is not so clear.

Government to review $6 million anti-drug plan next week

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN — A proposed $6 million scheme to combat drug abuse is expected to be discussed and approved next week by the government and voluntary anti-drug organisations, an official said Tuesday.

Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Assistant Secretary General Hamdi Murad told the Jordan Times that the Anti-Narcotics Preparatory Committee Saturday agreed on the draft plan of the proposed three-year phased project and is awaiting the Anti-Narcotics Higher Committee's approval.

According to Murad, who heads the preparatory committee, the draft scheme includes limiting the supply of and demand for drugs and providing what he called the "best ways" to treat and rehabilitate substance abusers.

Internal monitoring, training anti-drug groups, and cooperating with local and international parties regarding the issue "would help limit the drug supply," said Murad.

In addition to the Anti-Narcotics and Customs Departments, 12 ministers, including those from the health, awqaf, justice, social development, education, information, and youth ministries, would be involved in the plan, as well as three voluntary organisations, several local universities and regional anti-drug bodies.

On Monday, the Public Security Department opened a two-week training seminar organised in conjunction with German criminal investigation departments on fighting substance abuse and drug trafficking.

In September, the government said new measures by the department have limited drug trafficking and abuse over the last two years.

It said the amount of heroin seized by the department from 1996 to 1998 equalled the amount seized during the previous 20 years.

"The drug problem in Jordan is serious but not alarming," a government statement said. "Thanks to the new effective measures, the department is now more successful in combating drugs and rehabilitating people using them."

According to official statistics, the Anti-Narcotics Department in 1996 brought 326 drug-related cases before the authorities: 556 Jordanians and 100 other nationals were involved. In that year, 1,349 kilogrammes of hashish, 67.1 kg of heroin, 43.35 kg of opium, 1.1 kg of cocaine and around 25 million pills, including tranquillisers and stimulants, were seized.

In 1997, 492 drug cases were prosecuted; in these, 701 Jordanians and 102 other nationals were reported to have been involved. In the same year, 894 kg of hashish, 82 kg of heroin, 22 kg of opium, 237 grammes of cocaine and around two million pills were seized.

This year, the department has so far prosecuted 336 drug-related cases involving 581 Jordanians and 48 other nationals. In its investigations, the department has seized 33 kg of hashish and 29 kg of heroin.

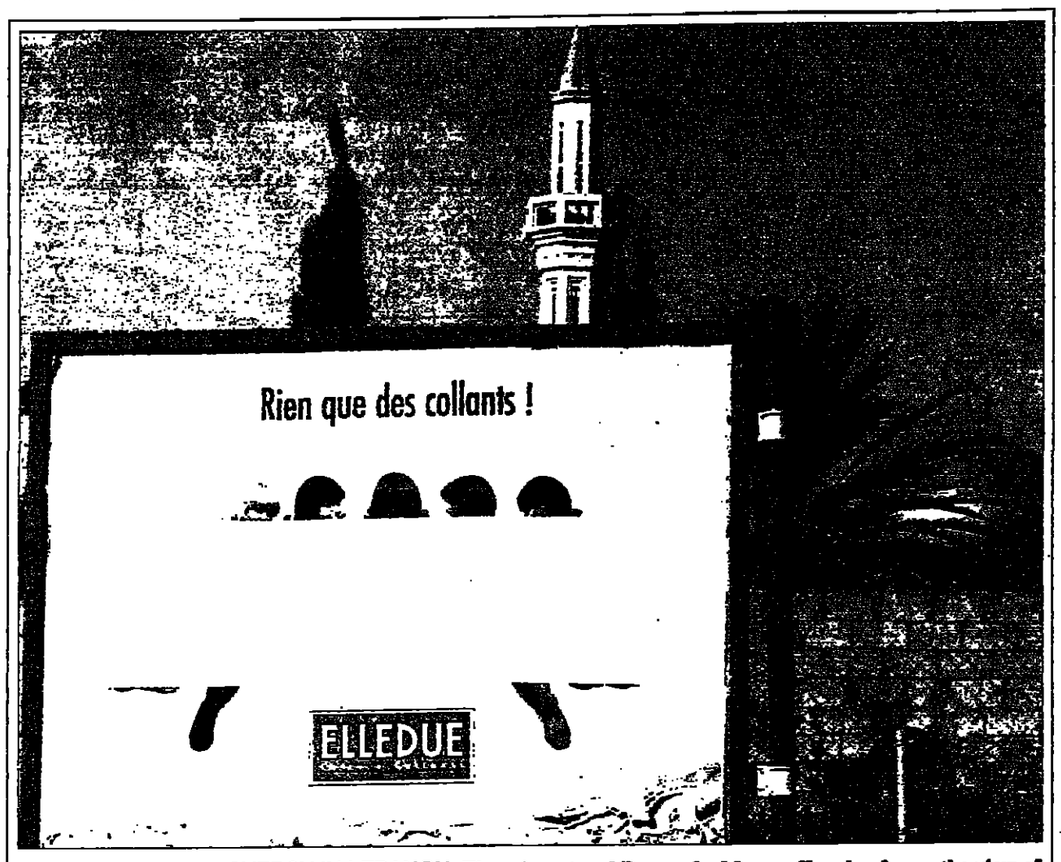
Last December, the department disclosed that drug abuse had increased over the past few years and that more than 3,000 citizens were suffering from drug dependency.

Under the supervision of the department, the government announced in July that a hospital specialised in drug-related problems would open in Amman soon.

Four years ago, His Majesty King Hussein sounded the alarm on Jordan's drug problem.

He said then that United Nations figures showed the Kingdom had 7,000 drug abusers, hooked mainly on tranquillisers but also heroin.

"We are either ashamed or we are unable to talk about this problem and start finding solutions, be it through tougher measures against smugglers and dealers or setting up centres to treat addicts and save them," the King said. "But to remain shy and to keep silent, in my view, is a mistake we are committing against ourselves and our children."



STOCKINGS CONTROVERSY IN LEBANON: **The minaret and Dome of a Mosque Tuesday frame the view of a defaced billboard which shows the backs of half-naked women in an advertisement for women's stockings on a Beirut street. The risque poster, which reads in French 'Nothing but stockings!' has drawn the ire of both Muslim and Christian clerics in Lebanon (AFP photo)**

Yemeni president urges Arabs to renew boycott of Israel

CAIRO (AP) — Arab states should revive their economic and political boycott of Israel, Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh said in remarks published Tuesday.

The president disapproved of the U.S. call for Arab nations to normalise relations with Israel, made after the Israeli-Palestinian accord signed outside Washington last month.

"Why don't we boycott Israel? It's the archenemy which deserves to be boycotted," Saleh told the Egyptian newspaper Al Shaab in an interview.

Arab governments suspended part of their economic embargo on Israel after the Palestinian-Israeli peace accord of 1993. They decided to allow trade with foreign companies that do business with Israel, but maintained the embargo on direct trade with the Jewish state.

Several Arab countries also opened diplomatic or trade missions in Israel, but such moves ground to a halt after Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu came to power in 1996 and adopted a hard-line approach toward the peace process.

"When Arabs agree and restore their solidarity and revive the boycott of Israel, America will be forced to make an understanding with Arabs," Saleh said. Arab governments have long accused the United States of a pro-Israeli tilt in its foreign policy.

Yemen has no ties with Israel.

Palestinians accuse Israel of delaying Gaza airport opening

JERICHO (AFP) — The Palestinians accused Israel on Monday of delaying the long-awaited opening of their first airport in the Gaza Strip.

"The Israeli side is manoeuvring to prevent the opening of our airport, which should happen Tuesday according to the Wye Plantation accords," chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat told reporters here.

He said the Israelis had made the opening conditional on concessions by the Palestinians on security procedures for roads to allow Palestinians to drive between the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

Longed for as both a symbol of sovereignty and an economically important outlet from the Israeli-encircled Palestinian territories, the airport has been ready to open for business for more than a year.

But disputes over the sharing of security responsibilities at the airport and the stalemate around other more important issues in the complex peace negotiations has kept the airport idle.

Erakat also complained about the resumption of a campaign of "Israeli colonisation" in Arab east Jerusalem after Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu gave the green light Sunday for the start of work on a 132-home project in the Arab neighbourhood of Ras Al Amoud.

He said he had called U.S. Middle East envoy Dennis Ross to ask that the United States put pressure on Israel to ensure it "respects the Wye Plantation accord and ceases its settlement policies."

The accord signed in Washington on Oct. 23 calls on Israel to withdraw from 13 per cent of the West Bank in return for Palestinian security guarantees.

It also calls for a halt to all "unilateral actions" which change the status of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank prior to negotiations which are to begin soon on a permanent peace settlement.

Yilmaz accuses Athens, Nicosia of testing Ankara's patience

NICOSIA (AFP) — Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz accused Greece and the Greek Cypriots Tuesday of testing Turkey's "patience" and warned of the consequences for the divided eastern Mediterranean island.

"Greece and Greek Cyprus are trying to test our patience and determination about the Cypriot question," Yilmaz told journalists on his arrival in north Cyprus for a one-day visit.

"I advise them to immediately give up this dangerous behaviour — the Greeks and the Greek Cypriots will suffer the consequences of their actions and their desire to raise tension in the island," he warned.

Yilmaz criticised joint exercises Greek and Greek-Cypriot troops held on the island last month under a defence pact signed between Athens and Nicosia in 1993.

He also condemned plans announced during the exercises for a Greek naval base at Ziyi in the government-held south.

"Turkey will never give up on its strategic rights and interests on Cyprus and in the Aegean," Yilmaz insisted.

The Turkish prime minister again criticised plans by the island's internationally recognised Greek-Cypriot government to deploy advanced ground-to-air missiles later this year.

Tensions have been running high on the island since Nicosia ordered the S-300 missiles from Russia early last year.

"The Greek-Cypriots still refuse to cancel the S-300 order from Russia," Yilmaz said.

Ankara, which maintains 35,000 troops in the north of the island, has threatened to destroy the missiles if they are deployed as planned, charging they pose a threat to Turkey's Mediterranean coast as well as Turkish Cypriots.

The Turkish prime minister also cautioned the European Union against continuing membership negotiations with the Cyprus government.

Continuation of the talks will "give the green light to the perpetual division of the island and add another problem to the union's agenda," he warned. "We will not wait forever for the EU to see reality."

Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot leaders announced an integration plan in 1997 warning that they would press ahead with full integration if the EU granted Nicosia membership.

Yilmaz said Ankara still fully supported Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash's insistence on recognition for his breakaway Turkish Republic of North Cyprus. Only Ankara recognises the breakaway state he declared in 1983.

Israeli court extends Lebanese captives' detention

TEL AVIV (AP) — An Israeli judge extended the detention Tuesday of two Hizbollah leaders held for years without charges or trial since they were kidnapped from their homes in Lebanon by Israel.

Sheikh Abdul Karim Obeid, captured by Israel in 1989, and Mustafa Dirani, captured in 1994, will be held in administrative detention for another six months.

Judge Uri Goren, acting chief justice of the Tel Aviv District Court, will review the detention order again Feb. 1, 1999.

Israel is holding the two as bargaining chips in exchange for information about Israeli air force navigator Ron Arad, missing since October 1986 after his jet was shot down during a bombing mission over south Lebanon.

Israel believes Arad is being held by Iran or Iranian-backed Hizbollah, whose guerrilla fighters are trying to force Israel out of southern Lebanon.

Israel's supreme court ruled earlier this year that the two men could be held without charge in exchange for information about Arad. An appeal is pending.

Iranian FM to visit Iraq amid talk of boosting cooperation

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Ministers from Iraq and Iran expressed their determination on Monday to boost cooperation, amid expectations that Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi will make an official visit to Baghdad soon.

"Iraq is seeking to activate and develop its cooperation with Iran in all fields and to expand its relations with Tehran in the near future," Iraqi Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan said in talks with Iran's Commerce Minister Mohammad Shariatmadari.

Ramadan said the two countries, who were at war for eight years from 1980 to 1988, should develop solid relations to present a common front against "American-Zionist imperialism," the official Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported.

Shariatmadari also said Tehran was determined to strengthen cooperation with Baghdad, INA reported.

The Iranian minister, who is in Baghdad for an international trade fair, and his Iraqi counterpart Mohammad Mahdi Saleh, held talks on developing trade under the U.N. oil-for-food programme which eases the eight-year-old sanctions against Iraq.

Meanwhile in Tehran, Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Sadr told the English-language Tehran Times that Kharazi would visit Baghdad "soon," without giving a date.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel. 4773111-19
PROGRAMME TWO

15:10 "The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin"
15:30 Children's Programme — Halfway to Cross the Galaxy and Turn Left
16:00 ..French Documentary
16:30 Masters of the Maze
17:00 Doc. — Ushuaia
18:15 Wind at My Back
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 Science Magazine — E=M6
19:30 News headlines
19:35 ...Comedy — Two Point 4 Children
20:00 Doc. — Envoy Special Magazine
20:30 Drama – NYPD Blue
21:10 Great Moments of Science and Technology
21:30 Faces and Places
22:00 News in English
22:30 Chicago Hope
23:59 Drama – The Ambassador
01:00 End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:31 Fajr
05:50(Sunrise)Duha
11:19 Dhuhr
14:22'Asr
16:48.....Maghreb
18:07'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifieh. Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 4622366
Anglican Church Tel. 4624853/4624811.
St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 4771751.
Amman International Church Tel. 5865897
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 5811295
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932
St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440
Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138
Church of Presentation, Sweifieh Tel. 5920146
The Uniate Catholic Church Tel. 4624757
The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190
Evangelical Free Church Tel. 4892679
The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052
The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 4771331
The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 4775261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

It will be sunny, moderate, temperatures rising slightly, and winds southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, it will be moderate, winds northerly moderate to active, and seas calm.

Amman	11/26
Aqaba	16/30
Deserts	09/28
Jordan Valley	15/32

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 25, Aqaba 29 Humidity readings: Amman 33 per cent, Aqaba 46 per cent.

Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun	21
Jerash	28
Um Qays	27
Madaba	25
Petra	26
Dead Sea	33

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS NIGHT DUTY

Dr. Khalil Tusluq 4757253
Dr. Bahjat Bader 5332642
Dr. Nasser Bader.....5350432
Dr. Wafiq Qaddumi.....4893542

AMMAN:
Firas Pharmacy 5661912
Al Salam Pharmacy 4636730
Mayadah Pharmacy ...5537004
Rukn Al Dawa Pharmacy 5536169

IRBID:
Dr. Issam Al Salih(02)246858
Fou'ad Pharmacy .(02)275360

ZARQA:
Dr. Walid Nabhan.(09)3851743
Palestine Pharmacy..(09)983562

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre.....4637111
Civil Defence Department 5661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 4630341
Civil Defence Emergency.....199
Rescue Police 192, 4621111, 4637777
Fire Brigade.....4617101
Blood Bank.....4775121
Highway Police.....5343402
Traffic olice.....4896390
Public Security Dept.....4630321
Hotel Complaints.....5605800
Price Complaints.....5661176
Water & Sewerage Complains 4897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 4787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 0132
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 4623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs.....5661101
Jordan Television 4773111
Radio Jordan 4774111
Water Authority 5680100
J. Electricity Authority .5815615
Electric Power Co.... 4636381
RJ Flight Information 44-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport ..44-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199
The Islamic, Abdli 5666131/7
Hussein Medical Centre...5856856
Luzmila 4630195
Khalidi Maternity.....4644281/6
Akileh Maternity.....4642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity...4642362
Malhas, J. Amman. 4636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 5607071
Shmeisani Hospital 5607431
Jordan Hospital 5607550
University Hospital 5353444
Al-Muasher Hospital 5667227/9
Al-Ahli, Abdali 5664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 4777101/3
Al-Bashir.....4775111/26
Army, Marka 4891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital.....5157100
Amal Hospital 5607155
Al Amal Cancer Centre ..5353000

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital(09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital(09)986731
Al Hikma Modern Hospital(09)990990

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital(02)275555
Roman Catholic Hospital(02)272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital(02)7101372, (02)7103101
Rosary Sisters Hospital(02)7102831, (02)7102011
Speciality Hospital(02)7103100

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)2014111

FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (4453200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 44 (52700). Information on Royal Wings flights can be supplied on phone 4875201-5

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

07:30 Damascus (RJ)
08:35 Jeddah (RJ)
08:50 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:55 Larnaca (RJ)
15:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
16:00 Madrid (RJ)
16:25 London (RJ)
16:50 Istanbul (RJ)
17:55 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
18:00 Barcelona (RJ)
18:20 ...Brussels, Berlin (RJ)
18:35 Rome (RJ)
19:00 Paris, Geneva (RJ)
23:10 Paris (RJ)
23:59 Cairo (RJ)

Other Flights

09:30 Cairo (MS)
10:30 Jeddah (SV)
12:20 Kuwait (KU)
13:10 Tunis (TU)
13:20 Bahrain (GF)
14:05 Rome (AZ)
15:05 Vienna (OS)
15:30 Algiers (AH)
18:05 Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)
18:40 Beirut (ME)
19:15 Frankfurt (LH)
00:55 London, Damascus (BA)
01:25 Athens (OA)
02:00 Rome (AZ)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights

10:30 Aqaba (arriving at QAIA) (RW)
11:15..Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)
18:00..Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)
19:20 Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA) (RW)
23:25 Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)

DEPARTURES

06:50 Larnaca (RJ)
07:20 Barcelona (RJ)
08:25 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
10:10 Rome (RJ)
11:00 Istanbul (RJ)
12:15 London (RJ)
19:35..... Beirut (RJ)
19:45..... Colombo (RJ)
20:00 Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
20:15 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
20:15 Bombay (RJ)
20:25 Cairo (RJ)
20:35 New Delhi (RJ)
21:00 Calcutta (RJ)
21:15 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
22:45 Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights

06:30 Larnaca (CY)
07:25 Damascus, London (BA)
07:25 Paris (AF)
10:30 Cairo (MS)
12:00 ..Medina, Jeddah (SV)
13:20 Kuwait (KU)
14:10 Bahrain (GF)
14:10 Tunis (TU)
15:30 Vienna (OS)
15:30 Rome (AZ)
16:20 Shariqah (AH)
19:30 Abu Dhabi, Karachi (PK)
00:35 Amsterdam (KL)
02:45 Athens (OA)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights

08:00 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
09:30..Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
17:30 Tel Aviv (from Marka Airport)(RW)
21:30 ..Aqaba (from QAIA) (RW)



French President Jacques Chirac listens to Her Majesty Queen Noor upon her arrival Tuesday at Fontainebleau to attend the opening of a meeting marking international efforts to improve the environment. Chirac praised His Majesty King Hussein for his role in the Middle East agreement reached at Wye Plantation last month (AP photo)

Queen delivers keynote address at international conservation meeting

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor yesterday delivered the keynote address at a meeting of the world environment and conservation community in Fontainebleau, France, to mark the first half-century of the modern international conservation movement, initiated in 1948 with the establishment of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), a Royal Court statement said.

Also attending the opening ceremony were French President Jacques Chirac and the presidents of Burkina Faso, Mali and Switzerland.

The Queen, IUCN patron, began her speech by relaying a message from His Majesty King Hussein, whom she described as the "pioneer of the environmental movement in the region." She added that the King is responding excellently to treatment in the United States.

Queen Noor noted that when the IUCN was established 50 years ago, "much of the globe was recovering from the worst conflict in human history, and many countries were still under colonial rule, suffering unrestrained economic and environmental exploitation of their natural resources."

According to the Queen, the founders of the IUCN recognised "the need to mobilise the world community to protect our living planet... they had realised that conservation could not be a matter for governments alone: to be effective on the ground, it needed the vital partnership of the non-governmental sector. This, in the context of the world at the time, was a revolutionary concept."

Queen Noor said two IUCN concepts in particular now "form the heart of environmental protection and economic development strategies in many countries: first, the idea that people cannot be denied access to the resources of their regions... as long as it is ecologically sound. And second, that conservation and development are inextricably linked."

Jordan, according to the Queen, was among the many countries that benefited from the IUCN's technical assistance in formulating a national environmental strategy in 1991 — the first in the Middle East — and in uniting nature conservation with national socio-economic development. The Queen gave the examples of the nature reserves of Dana and Wadi Rum, where conservation efforts have been linked with tourism and revitalised local production to increase employment and income.

Nature conservation also plays a vital role in national security, which, according to the Queen, is "all too apparent in the Middle East, where water and arable land shortages, in particular, cause increasingly tense and sometimes violent confrontations among states, as well as within them."

The Queen noted that the potential seriousness of such conflicts over resource in the Middle East and globally has prompted the IUCN "to launch a global initiative on environment and security to begin in 1999. This initiative will help illuminate the causes of tension and conflict, and identify how resource degradation leads to wider national distress. It will also explore how jointly protecting and sharing resources can promote social stability, economic growth and peaceful coexistence."

The Queen concluded her speech by saying that "half a century ago, the IUCN's founders made a pledge to protect our Earth... the problems we face are serious, but solvable — if we act now. We can bequeath to our children's children a world of abundant resources, rich diversity and natural beauty. We are gathered here this week to rededicate ourselves to fulfil that dream."

In his remarks, President Chirac commended the role that the King played in the signing of the Wye River Memorandum and asked Queen Noor to convey France's wishes for a speedy recovery.

President Chirac outlined the various threats to the environment such as the quadrupling of carbon dioxide emissions over the last 50 years and the rate of soil degradation and deforestation. The president said "a quarter of the Earth's population has no access to drinking water, and half have no water treatment system.... In two generations' time, we are probably going to have to feed, house, care for, and education some nine billion people."

He said that in order to achieve that, everyone will have to adapt: industrialised countries must reform their patterns for production and consumption, while emerging countries need to invent a new mode of development: "clean development." He added that "defeating poverty is also a vital condition for the preservation of the environment."

Earlier during the opening ceremony, Queen Noor announced the Reuters-IUCN Media Awards, which is the first programme of its kind to be launched at a global level. The Queen presented awards to two journalists, Geoffrey Lean of The Independent and Busani Bafan from Zimbabwe, for their outstanding contributions to bringing environmental issues to the general public. Eight regional awards and a global prize will be presented annually to reports which most successfully relate environmental issues with mainstream socio-political and economic affairs. The awards are open to practising journalists of the written press throughout the world, and the winner will be offered fellowships and training opportunities organised by the Reuter Foundation, the statement said.

Founded in 1948, the IUCN is one of the world's oldest international conservation organisations. It brings together states, government agencies and a diverse range of non-governmental organisations in a world partnership. The union boasts over 900 members in all, spread across some 138 countries.

Regent, British official discuss boosting Jordan-U.K. cooperation



HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday confers at the Royal Court with visiting British official George Foulkes (Photo by Boghos)

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, conferred Tuesday with George Foulkes, British parliamentary undersecretary of state for international development, about means of boosting Jordanian-British cooperation in economic and development fields and British aid to the Kingdom.

At the meeting, which was attended by Royal Court Chief Jawad Anani and Minister of Public Works and Housing and Transport Nasser Lawzi, the Regent underlined Jordan's desire to promote economic ties with Britain and the other members of the European Union.

Prince Hassan reaffirmed the need for practical steps to be taken to help Jordan benefit from the Euro-Jordanian Association Agreement.

The British official said his country desires to promote economic, social, and technical cooperation with Jordan within the framework of the European Union.

Foulkes was accompanied by Ibrahim Badran, director of the Palestinian Affairs Department, on a visit to Baqaa refugee camp, where he was briefed on services offered to refugees as well as Jordan's efforts to improve the camps' infrastructure services and raise their residents' standard of living.

Badran said it was essential that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) continue to offer educational and health services to the refugees.

Foulkes later visited the Family Protection Unit at the Public Security Department, where he met with its director, Nasouh Muhieddin, who thanked the British government for its continued training and material assistance.

Regent calls for development of Arab educational research strategy

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday said an Arab strategy on educational research should be developed to define educational systems and determine research programmes.

In an address delivered on his behalf by Education Minister Fawzi Gharaibeh at the opening of a conference on education research in the Arab World, the Regent said this strategy could develop a working plan to be executed in conjunction with organisations, such as UNESCO and UNICEF, operating in Arab countries.

The Regent underlined the need for research to diagnose the present educational system in the Arab World and help draw up plans for the future.

Prince Hassan called for linking educational research with the actual needs of the educational system and linking output with social and economic development needs.

He called for investment in research aimed at development, stressing the need to steer work in a manner that would meet the requirements of development.

Walid Masani, president of the University of Jordan, said the three-day conference seeks to focus attention on the management of educational research, sources of financing, teachers' training and care for children with special needs, among other issues.

He said the conference is also designed to help bridge the gap between research results and decisions on education.

The conference was organised by the University of Jordan, Yarmouk University, Al Hashemieh University, Al al Bait University and Mu'ta University in cooperation with the Education Ministry and the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation.

A total of 37 working papers dealing with educational research are being reviewed by educational specialists from Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Yemen, Palestine, Tunisia, Algeria, Iraq, Kuwait and Libya.

Claims over planned milk sales dismissed

By Suha Ma'ayeh

AMMAN — The government has denied recent claims by the Jordan Society for Consumer Protection about plans to sell unfit powdered milk to retail merchants.

Since 1974, the Supply Ministry has been importing sacks of powdered milk, a popular commodity named "Halibuna." This year, the ministry imported 200,000 sacks, 2,751 of which were pierced, according to Ahmad Assaf, acting secretary general of the ministry.

"Any pierced sack is not suitable for human consumption," Assaf said, adding that damaged quantities will be sold to cow breeders only for calf nursing.

Last month, the ministry ran four advertisements in the Arabic daily Al Ra'i announcing the sale of the damaged sacks of milk, indicating that cow breeders only would be eligible to purchase these products.

The decision drew criticism from the consumer protection society.

"The supply ministry should have destroyed the spoiled milk instead of selling it to merchants," said Mohammad Obeidat, head of the society.

"Who can guarantee that this milk won't be sold to the public by unscrupulous merchants?" Obeidat asked.

But Assaf ruled out any possibility of the damaged milk sacks reaching the local market, saying that milk from pierced sacks is mixed with special food dyes to distinguish it before being packaged in large bulk sacks.

"The milk is sold in large quantities and not in the original sacks," he stressed.

Samer Khoury, quality control manager at the ministry, stated that pierced sacks of Halibuna were inspected at the Ministry of Agriculture's laboratory last month, and results showed that the powdered milk was suitable for animal consumption only.

"Instead of destroying the pierced sacks and causing waste, cow breeders can benefit, as the quantities are sold at very cheap prices, 10 piasters for each kilogramme," he said.

But Obeidat warned that the spoiled milk might be used in other food products, which he said could pose a threat to consumers.

He also criticised the Supply Ministry for trying to sell the spoiled milk to cow breeders.

"If animals consume spoiled milk, this will put people's health at risk," Obeidat added.

what's going on

FILMS

* "Islamic Art in the Mamluk Heritage" (with commentary in Arabic by Dr. Mazin Asfour) at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh on Thursday Nov. 5 at 5:30 p.m.

* Spanish film "Tirano Bande-ras" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman on Thursday Nov. 5 at 5:00 p.m. (Tel. 4610858).

* German film "Der Weltmeister" (with subtitles in English) at Goethe-Institut, Jabal Amman at 7:00 p.m.

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

* A Service of Remembrance at the Church of the Holy Redeemer on Saturday Nov. 7 at 6:00 p.m.

LECTURE

* "The Literary Works of Pio Baroja" (in Arabic) by Dr. Hikmat Allawi at Ahmad Ibn Jalil Al Farahidi amphitheatre, University of Jordan at 1:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* "Jordan Yesterday and Today" (marking His Majesty King Hussein's birthday) at the Amman International Fair, Marj Al Hamam, until Nov. 6

* A three-dimensional exhibition on canvas by Susanna Caldwell, Darleen Karpowicz, and Rawabi AbuGhazaleh Silawi at the Jordan Arts and Crafts Centre (Artisana), Jabal Amman, off the second circle, until Nov. 10 (Telefax 4647858).

* "Masterworks of the Spanish Contemporary Architecture and Presentation of Architecture Guide: Spain 1920-2000" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, until Nov. 6.

* Ceramics by Ra'd and Ahmad Al Delaimi at Hammurabi Arts Gallery, Gardens St. (Tel. 5536098), until Nov. 5.

* Exhibition of works by Palestinian artist Kamal Boullata entitled "Homage to Jerusalem," an exhibition of paintings by late Palestinian artist Zulfa Al Sa'di, an exhibition by Palestinian-American photographer Sa'id Nuseibah entitled "The Farthest Mosque" at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until Nov. 12 (Tel. 4643251/2).

هكذا من الأصل

Union asks government to ban foreign labour in hotel industry

By Mohammad Ben Hussein

AMMAN — The Jordan Union for Public Services has called for banning foreign labourers from working in the hotel industry, union chief Aboud Jada' has said.

"There are around 7,500 foreigners working in hotels, and something has to be done about it," said Jada'.

"The union is ready to cooperate with the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Labour to help minimise the number of foreigners working in this sector," but "such a move needs commitment and support from hotels across the Kingdom, or it will fail," Jada' told the Jordan Times on Sunday.

Jada' called on the Labour Ministry to coordinate with the union before issuing work permits to foreigners.

However, a ministry official described the suggestion as premature. "The ministry is doing its best to organise the local labour market by first rectifying the status of foreign workers in the country in general," said Saleh Tarawneh, Labour Ministry secretary general. Tarawneh added that "the ministry welcomes the views of the union and its suggestion on how to tackle the problem."

According to Jada', Jordanians would accept working in hotels if they received all their rights under the Labour Law, including eight-hour shifts, health insurance, social security and other privileges.

He said the union will continue to press for a minimum wage to encourage Jordanians to take many jobs that until now they have refused.

But as has been the case with other jobs filled primarily by foreign labourers, hotel proprietors challenged Jada' to find enough Jordanians to replace foreigners in this sector.

"Jordanians shun certain types of jobs in hotels such as housekeeping and being stewards, because they believe it is 'eib [shameful]," said a member of the Jordan Hotels Association.

Many experts have warned the government against moving too fast to seek to replace foreign labourers with Jordanians in sectors shunned by Jordanians.

The pay scale of housekeeping workers and stewards is around JD200 per month, including the basic salary plus service charges and tips, according to Jada', who is also personnel manager at Amra Hotel.

The labour law bans foreign labourers from 14 job areas, including working as engineers, doctors, pharmacists, teachers, writers, guards, hairdressers, and accountants.

Five-star hotels across the Kingdom seem to be more oriented towards giving Jordanians priority in filling vacancies. "Amra Hotel, for example, employs 100 per cent Jordanian employees," said Jada'.

"Hotels outside the capital, like those in Wadi Mousa and Aqaba, even give preference once to employees from the same town," said Mohammad Shreiteh, a waiter at the Taybet Zaman resort in Wadi Mousa.

Jada' complained that unclassified hotels prefer employing foreigners who will work more than 10 hours a day without any benefits such as health insurance and social security.

Philippines, Sri Lankan governments asked to cooperate on expatriate labour

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Labour Mohammad Mahdi Farhan yesterday urged the governments of the Philippines and Sri Lanka to work with Jordan to control the number of illegal Asian workers in the country.

During a meeting with the ambassadors of the two countries, Farhan said Asian workers that retained both work and residency permits were estimated at 7,635, "most of whom" are either Filipino or Sri Lankan.

"We do think that their numbers are much higher than this," Farhan said. "We appreciate and respect those who reside and work here within the parameters of Jordanian law. However, we cannot allow 'extra' workers."

"We would like both governments to cooperate with Jordan to see that their nations come to Jordan only when they are sure that they will work in accordance with Jordanian regulations," Farhan said.

However, Asian workers say that they cannot always be blamed for their "illegal" status. Many Asian labourers, the majority of whom are employed as domestic workers, come to Jordan through organisations registered as either business services agencies or as travel agencies.

"Once we arrive in Jordan," said one Sri Lankan maid, "we are entirely dependent on the good will of our employers to sort out our working papers, which is their responsibility according to the contract they have signed with the agency."

However, explained one independent source, as the "agencies" are not recognised as legal "recruitment" agencies, and as Article 3 of Labour Law Number Eight of 1996 does not extend its jurisdiction to either agricultural or domestic labourers, the contract is binding neither on the agency nor the employer, who, according to law, should pay approximately JD300 for an annual work permit for each foreign employee. But if the employer chooses not to pay, said the source, the maid simply becomes illegal, and has "little legal recourse against either employer or agency, since none of the transaction was legal to begin with."

Rupert Dizon, Philippines ambassador, explained that the Philippines does try to regulate the export of its labour force through one recognised agency run by the department of labour in Manila, the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration. The POEA employs strict guidelines to make sure that labourers are treated well abroad and places its workers abroad through accredited agencies in the second country.

"Jordan has no accredited agencies," said Dizon. "So illegal agencies simply bypass government offices. At the same time, it is very easy for a Filipina or a Sri Lankans to enter Jordan on a working visa obtained by the employer in Amman. They become illegal because the employer fails to get the proper paperwork done."

U.S. envoy holds Kosovo talks

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AP) — Shuttle diplomacy in Kosovo entered another round Tuesday with U.S. envoy Christopher Hill travelling to the provincial capital of Pristina to talk with representatives of the ethnic Albanian majority.

Hill held separate talks with Serb President Milan Milutinovic and European Union envoy Wolfgang Petritsch Monday after arriving from the Macedonian capital, Skopje.

Hill, the U.S. ambassador to Macedonia, has led international efforts to find a political solution for the secessionist Serbian province.

Hundreds of people have been killed and an estimated 300,000 more have been forced from their homes since February, when Serb authorities launched a crackdown on ethnic Albanian militants in the southern Serb province where ethnic Albanians outnumber Serbs 9 to 1. Serbia is the dominant republic in Yugoslavia.

Also Tuesday, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Julia Taft was meeting in Belgrade with Yugoslav government officials and representatives of media organisations that were banned under a harsh new media law.

Last week, Taft visited refugees in Kosovo to assess the humanitarian situation.

The number of people camped out in the open has dropped considerably since Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic pulled his troops out of the province last week, said Jacques Franquin, a spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva.

Franquin said the number of people living in the open is estimated to be a few hundred, but cautioned that the numbers are very approximate, as many people have not returned to their own homes, but are staying in villages with neighbours and relatives.

As part of an Oct. 12 agreement, Milosevic pledged to order troops back to their barracks and dismantle police barricades, allowing people to return home in safety.

But Tuesday a regional command of the rebel Kosovo Liberation Army claimed that Serb forces have not been withdrawing from their checkpoints in the west of the province.

In a statement faxed to the ethnic Albanian media, a KLA regional command statement claimed that Serb forces have regrouped and relocated to positions farther off the main roads. It also said the Serbs were harassing and shooting at ethnic Albanians trying to return to their villages.

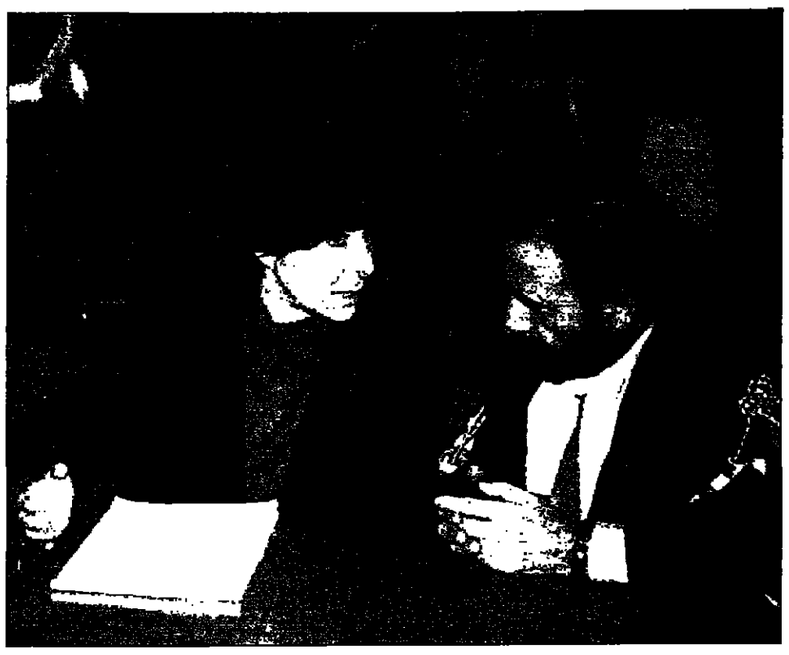
"If provocations, attacks and murder of civilians continue, the (KLA) will be forced to take defensive measures," said the statement.

The KLA statement also claimed Serb police buried nine ethnic Albanians in the border town of Junik Monday. The Albanians were reportedly killed recently in border clashes.

None of the reports could be independently confirmed and there was no immediate response from the Serb side.

Serb sources in the province reported Tuesday that the KLA attacked an ethnic Albanian family overnight for "its known loyalty to Serbia."

According to testimony from the Sopa family, four uniformed KLA members riddled their home with bullets. The head of the family, Fehmi Sopa, was in a coma in a Pristina hospital, said the Serbian Media Centre. The family lives in the village of Malo Gracko, 20 kilometres south of Pristina.



Patrizia Reggiani, ex-wife of slain fashion mogul Maurizio Gucci talks with her lawyer Giovanni Maria Dedola in a Milan court. Reggiani, 50, is accused of ordering the murder of Gucci, who was gunned down and died in a pool of blood on the steps of his Milan office three years ago. A verdict was expected later November 3 after the court retired to consider their verdict (Reuters photo)

Gucci ex-wife pleads naiveté as murder trial draws to end

MILAN, Italy (AP) — The ex-wife of slain fashion heir Maurizio Gucci made a final plea of innocence Tuesday before a packed courtroom, saying she was naive and involved in his murder against her will.

A verdict from the panel of two judges and five citizens was expected later in the day.

Patrizia Reggiani Martinelli is accused of murdering her ex-husband to gain control of his fortune. The prosecution has asked for the maximum sentence in Italy: life imprisonment.

Also on trial for murder are her longtime psychic adviser, Giuseppina Auriemma, the doorman of a seedy hotel, a debt-ridden pizzeria owner accused of pulling the trigger, and an unemployed auto worker accused of driving the getaway car.

All but Gucci's ex-wife and the pizzeria owner have confessed.

Gucci, 46, was shot to death March 27, 1995, outside his Milan office. He was the grandson of Guccio Gucci, founder of the fashion company known for its leather goods and double "G" logo.

Maurizio Gucci was the last Gucci to hold a stake in the company, but he sold out for $120 million in 1993 after a long history of family discord.

With its sordid courtroom revelations about greed, betrayal and shameless social climbing, the five-month trial has aired a seamy side of Milan, the chic capital of Italy's fashion industry.

Prosecution witnesses testified that Reggiani Martinelli wasn't satisfied with her $860,000 a year in alimony and wanted all of her ex-husband's money.

Pale and drawn, Reggiani Martinelli pointed her finger Tuesday at Auriemma, whom she says arranged the murder, then blackmailed her for $375,000.

"I have been naive to the point of stupidity," she told a packed courtroom that included her son and mother. "I found myself involved against my will. I deny categorically that I was an accomplice."

The once-glamorous Reggiani Martinelli said Auriemma, a Neapolitan of humble origins, used her to satisfy an obsessive hunger for money and power.

"Never let even a friendly wolf into the chicken coop. Sooner or later it will get hungry," she said.

Reggiani Martinelli, 50, has admitted threatening Gucci and repeatedly seeking someone to kill him, but says she never went through with the plan.

Auriemma has admitted arranging Gucci's murder but testified that she did it at Reggiani Martinelli's behest. She made no final statement Tuesday.

The driver of the getaway car, Orazio Cicala, and hotel doorman Ivano Savioni, who acted as a go-between, both made public pleas for forgiveness. Alleged triggerman Benedetto Ceraulo again maintained his innocence.

"I've reflected a lot over these long months," Savioni told the court. "I know that I face many long years in prison for what I've done. I ask the pardon of Gucci's children and am horrified that things went so much farther than I intended."

Plan of action expected to protect African human rights defenders

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Some 100 delegates from 44 African countries met Tuesday at the All-Africa Human Rights Defenders Conference, hosted by Amnesty International, to find ways of protecting activists and workers.

At the end of their deliberations Wednesday, delegates are expected to adopt a "Johannesburg Declaration," intended "to protect and promote the work of African human rights defenders," Amnesty International stated.

The organisation's Secretary General Pierre Sane said Monday: "The declaration is a political statement by the human rights defenders in Africa who will briefly summarise the harsh conditions under which they are working."

He said the document will also "stigmatise the attitudes of many governments and reaffirm (the defenders') right to organise freely in order to defend the rights of African people."

The conference has drawn together a range of people, from journalists to trade unionists, who face harassment because of their commitment to exposing violations of human rights.

"Harassment varies from phone tapping and other forms of surveillance, to infiltration and from arrest to torture and assassination," an Amnesty International document said.

"Methods of protection employed by defenders include practical means such as limiting the use of telephones for conveying information and keeping sensitive documents outside the office, and political responses, such as laying charges if offices were burgled and publicising assaults or threats in the media."

At the opening of the conference Monday, Sane said that despite a pledge to uphold and promote basic human rights, enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations 50 years ago, African leaders have "failed to live up to their promises."

In fact, many governments were denying their citizens these rights and "torturing, killing and jailing those brave individuals who try to hold the authorities to account."

A plan of action and the declaration, prepared after a series of conferences on the continent since March 1996, will be presented to the first world summit of human rights defenders in Paris in December.

Low voter turnout expected for U.S. midterm elections

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.S. voters trickled to the polls in midterm elections Tuesday amid forecasts of a low turnout and predictions of little change in a Republican-dominated Congress that will soon decide the fate of President Bill Clinton.

Voting began at 6:00 a.m. (1100 GMT), starting on the eastern seaboard, the earliest U.S. time zone.

Republican candidates are expected to win on the legislative front, where 435 House of Representatives and 34 Senate seats are up for grabs.

The U.S. Congress, most likely early next year, will continue a probe into whether President Clinton should be impeached for allegedly lying under oath to cover up his sexual relationship with former intern Monica Lewinsky.

A strong showing by Democrats will discourage the Republican majority from pursuing the issue, analysts say.

Thirty-six state governor seats are also in play, including those in the five biggest states — such as California and New York — that will be key to the 2000 presidential race.

The grand prize, California, is expected to go to the Democrats for the first time in 16 years.

Statewide initiatives, state legislative jobs and other more local posts are also on the ballot across the country.

On the national level, the Republican party currently has an 11-seat edge in the U.S. House and a five-seat advantage in the U.S. Senate. They had expected to increase their numbers by plugging into voters' anger about Clinton's affair with Lewinsky, but polls indicate that most Americans are tired of the Republican attacks.

The relentless attack on Clinton is aimed more at energising Republican loyalists, who are more likely to come out and vote, than at the average voter, analysts say.

Traditionally the party that controls the White House loses seats in a midterm, but a Pew Research Centre poll out Monday showed support for Democrats has risen in the final days of campaigning.

Nevertheless voter participation is projected to be "down slightly or substantially" from the 1994 midterm, according to the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate.

The U.S. press Tuesday was clearly worried about the expected low turnout, with headlines across the country fretting about voter apathy.

"Get out the vote heard coast-to-coast," read the headline to the main election story in the Washington Post. "Forecast continues to be for low turnout."

Experts predict the turnout could be the lowest in decades, the Post noted. The Los Angeles Times noted that only a 62-per cent turnout is expected.

The race for the U.S. senate is especially tight in California, pitting Asian-American Matt Fong against incumbent Senator Barbara Boxer. At last report polls indicated the race was in a statistical dead heat.

In the California race for governor, a lackluster Democratic candidate, Gray Davis, is ahead in the polls against Republican Dan Lungren.

The New York Times focused its main election article on the national as a referendum on Clinton's future.

The turnout might be higher than average across New York state, where the senate race between incumbent Republican Al D'Amato and Democratic challenger Charles Schumer — one of the most expensive and nastiest this campaign season — is so tight it is impossible to say who has an edge in the polls.

In very tight races, such as New York, absentee ballots — mailed in days ahead of balloting, but not counted until after the polls close — sometimes determine the outcome.

Russia may name disputed islets as special area for Japan

TOKYO (AFP) — Russia plans to compromise with Japan over the disputed Kuril islands by declaring the archipelago a self-governing "special district" where Tokyo can take part in economic activities, a daily said Tuesday.

Russia is expected to unveil the plan when Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi meets President Boris Yeltsin on Nov. 12 in Moscow, the Sankei Shimbun said, quoting sources in the Russian capital.

It said the Russian government would transfer the four Kuril islands, located off the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido, from the control of Sakhalin district.

Moscow would then designate the islands "a special district" allowing islanders to govern themselves, the daily said.

It said Japan could be directly involved in econonic activities with "a special status." But Russia would continue in control and oppose the idea of mutual sovereignty with Japan.

In Moscow, Russian foreign ministry officials quoted Tuesday by ITAR-TASS news agency said the proposals would be kept under wraps until the meeting "in order to avoid any controversy."

Japan should be given time to "examine (the proposals) peacefully before the talks start," a diplomat was quoted as saying.

Yeltsin has promised to respond to a Japanese initiative to settle the dispute during Obuchi's visit this month, which is aimed at helping to pave the way for the signing of a peace treaty by 2000.

Tokyo and Moscow have yet to conclude the treaty formally ending World War II hostilities due to the dispute over the four small islands, which Soviet troops seized in 1945 as Japan was on the point of surrender.

Obuchi is due to leave for Moscow in Nov. 11, despite speculation over whether Yeltsin will be fit for the meeting. He left to rest in the country Friday after spending several days in a clinic suffering from "exhaustion".

The Japanese foreign ministry said Monday Yeltsin wrote to Obuchi and called for constructive talks at their summit.

An opinion poll showed last week that most Russians rejected the return of the four islands to Japan but supporters of a compromise are increasing in number.

The poll, carried out jointly by Russia's ITAR-TASS news agency and Japan's Asahi Shimbun, showed 55 per cent of Russians opposed any concessions.

But supporters of a compromise, involving demilitarisation of the islands and shared sovereignty, are on the increase from previous polls, representing 21 per cent of Japanese and 19 per cent of Russians.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Spanish govt okays contacts with ETA

MADRID (AFP) — The Spanish government has authorised contacts with the Basque separatist group ETA, which began an unlimited ceasefire on Sept. 16, officials said Tuesday. The government wants to see whether ETA will permanently renounce the principle of armed struggle in its 30-year drive for Basque independence, they said. The sources refused to say what kind of contacts had been authorised. Sunday, the daily El Pais reported that the government may conduct negotiations with Arnaldo Otegi, spokesman for ETA's political wing, Herri Batasuna. The authorities are prepared to drop demands that ETA hand over weapons before any talks can began, El Pais said. Some 800 people have been killed by the ETA, and thousands injured, since 1968.

Moi calls for withdrawal of uninvited troops from DR Congo

NAIROBI (AFP) — Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi called Tuesday for the immediate withdrawal of "uninvited foreign troops" from the war-torn Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), official radio reported, in an apparent reference to Ugandan and Rwandan soldiers. Moi, who was receiving credentials from the DRC's new ambassador to Kenya, Kiungu wa Kumwanza, said Kenya supported efforts by DRC President Laurent Kabila to unite the people of the central African country. He said any group of people which felt "oppressed" in the DRC should seek dialogue with the government in Kinshasa, adding that there was need to provide security to all DRC citizens. "The problems of (DR) Congo cannot be solved through killing. For that reason President Moi called for the complete withdrawal of troops uninvited by that country's government to stop bloodshed," the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) radio said. Kinshasa accuses Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi of fighting alongside the rebels who launched an uprising on Aug. 2. Uganda maintains that its troops are merely attacking Ugandan rebels with rear bases in the DRC. Kabila has invited and received troops from Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia and Chad to help him battle the Tutsi-led rebels. The rebels accuse Sudan of sending troops too, which Khartoum denies. At a summit here on Oct. 10, the presidents of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda called for an international peacekeeping force in the DRC and an "orderly withdrawal" of all foreign troops. Moi's comments Tuesday appeared to be a departure from last month's joint stand as he spoke only of the uninvited foreign troops.

Council of Europe opens trim new human rights court

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) — The Council of Europe hopes a streamlined European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France, that was to be inaugurated Tuesday, will more rapidly handle citizen complaints. "We're hoping the new system will speed up the procedure quite dramatically," said Council of Europe spokeswoman Kathy Burton. Under the old court system set up in 1950, rulings often took years. The new court will also be working full-time, unlike the old one which opened one week a month and handled about 100 cases a year, Burton said. Already this year, 4,791 cases have been registered, the Council of Europe said in a statement. The new system scraps a human rights commission that reviewed cases so they can get to judges sooner. The court rules on infringements of the 1950 European Human Rights Convention, which covers all 40 nations in the Council of Europe. Citizens from those nations can bring cases to the European court after they have exhausted legal options in their home countries. The court has 40 judges, one from each of the member countries.

Der Spiegel defends use of Hitler in ads

BERLIN (AP) — Responding to public protest, Germany's most influential newsmagazine defended Tuesday its use of an Adolf Hitler portrait in ads promoting its series about the 20th century. Newspapers that ran the full-page ads this week — and Der Spiegel magazine itself — reported complaints from readers that the head shot of Hitler, without any explanatory text, amounted to "a glorification of a war criminal." The ads feature a photo of Hitler above the line "Look history in the face." Only on the next page, under a photo of a crying Hitler youth member meant to contrast with the Hitler image, is there a reference to the 50-part Spiegel series, which began this week. Spiegel spokesman Matthias Schmolz said magazine editors anticipated some controversy, but felt Hitler could not be ignored. "He stands, probably like no one else, for German history in the 20th century, certainly very disastrous and unspeakable, naturally," he said. "But as far as that goes I believe he's a good choice, because it makes clear what the series is about." He said the editors decided to limit the Hitler ads to newspapers, though, "to avoid just such misunderstandings." Other figures such as Vladimir Lenin and John F. Kennedy appear on outdoor billboards. To complaints that neo-Nazis could use the newspaper ads as posters, Schmolz said only: "Whoever does that, we feel sorry for them."

105-year-old summoned to school

ECHALLENS, Switzerland (AP) — A retired Swiss schoolteacher, aged 105, received an order to attend elementary school when a computer cut a century off his age, a local official said Tuesday. The mix-up occurred because a list of local inhabitants delivered to education authorities contained only the last two figures of his date of birth, Echallens town hall secretary Roland Dougoud said. The man, born in 1893, and 65 local 5-years-old all received a letter earlier this year ordering them to start school. "We have changed the computer programme in question," Dougoud said. Millions of computer around the world must be reprogrammed to recognise the year 2000. Normally, they read only a year's last two digits, which could make them assume it is 1900. Experts disagree on whether the glitch represents a looming disaster or a temporary annoyance. But they say it has potential to play havoc with computer systems.

Astronauts to snare satellite

SPACE CENTRE, Houston (UPI) — The shuttle Discovery astronauts Tuesday were planning to pick up the Spartan science satellite, which was dispatched two days ago for a study of the sun. After breakfast and housekeeping chores, the crew were to turn their attention to the 3,000-pound probe, now drifting freely in space. Commander Curt Brown was to fly Discovery to within 30 feet of the boxy spacecraft so astronaut Stephen Robinson could extend the shuttle's payload bay crane and pluck Spartan from orbit. During the retrieval, which was scheduled for 3:45 p.m. EST, the astronauts also planned to test a robotic vision system being designed to help future crews build and maintain the International Space Station. The crew, which includes retiring senator and Mercury pioneer John Glenn, are halfway through a planned nine-day science flight. Glenn, 77, is flying as a research subject. He slept Monday night hooked up to 21 electrodes and body sensors as part of an effort to determine how sleep changes in weightlessness. During an interview, Glenn said the contraption is actually easier to wear in space than on Earth because there are no pressure points to worry about. Glenn said he has been sleeping well — and dreamlessly — in space.

هكذا عند الأصل



Salvadorean soldiers carry children rescued from flooded river banks in the village of San Nicolas de Lempa, some 65 kms east of San Salvador. The passage of Hurricane Mitch has left some 200 people dead and over 30,000 homeless in El Salvador as rescue efforts continue (Reuters photo)

7,000 feared dead; search for Central American flood survivors resumes

POSOLTEGA, Nicaragua (AFP) — Rescuers across Central America at sunrise Tuesday resumed searching for survivors of devastating floods and landslides that has reportedly killed some 7,000 people throughout the region.

Estimates of the death toll are at more than 5,000 in Honduras, some 1,450 in Nicaragua, 144 in El Salvador, 93 in Guatemala, seven in Costa Rica and one each in Panama and Mexico.

Authorities expect the figure to rise as more bodies are pulled from the rubble.

Roads, bridges, telephone and electricity lines have been washed away in vast areas, making communications with affected flooded towns especially difficult.

Rescuers in helicopters are plucking survivors, often hungry and dehydrated, from rooftops and treetops.

Here in Posoltega, 140 kilometres northwest of Managua, close to 2,000 people were still unaccounted for in the nearby five communities that were wiped out by a colossal landslide Friday that killed at least 850 people.

Some survivors remained trapped under the mud and rocks that rolled down the flank of the Las Casitas volcano, Posoltega Mayor Felecita Zeledon said.

Dozens of bodies were incinerated Monday to reduce risks of epidemics. Late Monday hundreds of jittery area residents fled in panic carrying whatever they could after rumbling sounds from the volcano hinted at another landslide, Zeledon said.

However nearby Honduras appeared to be the Central American country hardest hit by the passage of former Hurricane Mitch, with reports of a death toll of around 5,000.

Honduran rescue crews resumed the grim duty of sifting through the rubble of collapsed buildings searching for survivors under tonnes of mud and rocks brought down by landslides.

"There is almost no place in Honduras that hasn't been touched by the disaster," said Honduran President Carlos Flores, who issued an international SOS.

Flores described Honduras as "a landscape of death, desolation and ruin," where "overflowing rivers and landslides have wiped some towns and villages from the map."

Even as Mitch was heading out of Central America after being downgraded to a tropical storm, Guatemala reported 27 more deaths Monday as heavy rains pounded the country.

"We cannot cope with the huge demand for rescue, so we are trying to give food to those who are most isolated, hoping they will hold out until we can evacuate them," said Honduran Navy *Lieutenant Oscar Flores*.

Parents tied their children to treetops to save them from the rising waters, people searched for fallen fruit in the fetid waters covering banana plantations, and naked children begged for a little bread, or a sip of water.

"It makes you want to cry," said Mario Bettaglio, governor of El Salvador's San Miguel department, where 100 people died Sunday when their homes were swept away by floods.

Some 700,000 people have been made homeless, officials said.

In Guatemala City, crumbling buildings collapsed and power lines crashed onto the flooded streets, killing 14. A further 13 people were killed elsewhere in the country.

In Geneva, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies appealed for 10 million Swiss francs ($7.5 million) in aid for the region.

U.S. President Bill Clinton Monday announced the United States would airlift more than $2 million worth of food, medicine, water and other supplies to Central America. "We have drugs for about 15 days and are trying to avert an outbreak of epidemics," said Nicaraguan Health Minister Marta McCoy, appealing for international assistance.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan issued a statement expressing his "deepest condolences" to those affected, and urged the international community to contribute generously to aid efforts.

The United Nations also deployed emergency teams to Honduras and Nicaragua.

Britain said Saturday it had sent the HMS Sheffield frigate, with a Lynx helicopter on board, to Honduras to provide humanitarian assistance. France, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, Mexico and other countries have also pledged assistance.

Late Monday thousands crammed into the downtown Tegucigalpa cathedral for a farewell to the city's popular mayor, Cesar Castellanos, who died in a helicopter crash Sunday along with three aides while he was surveying storm damage.

Artificial heart saves student's life

LONDON (KUNA) — A student teacher from Surrey, near London, has become the first person in the world to be successfully fitted with a revolutionary artificial heart, doctors said Tuesday.

Julie Mills, 21, was just 20 minutes from death as a rare virus attacked her heart when a renowned Oxford surgeon inserted a small device which took the strain away from her faltering organ for a life-saving six days, the Mirror newspaper reported.

The student was only the fourth person to receive the American-developed surgical implant and the sole survivor after the previous three recipients died.

Julie, who has recovered to full health, said "it is hard to believe that only 12 weeks ago I was so close to death.

I was astounded when I was told what I had been through and that I was the first person in the country to have this artificial heart."

The operation was performed at John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, southern England, and experts had acted to insert the artificial heart after Julies heart was attacked by a killer illness, a severe viral infection.

Her initial flu-like symptoms, first diagnosed last August, caused her health to decline rapidly as she was transferred from a hospital near her home to a high dependency heart unit at the Middlesex Hospital in central London.

As the virus continued to weaken and overload her heart, Julie's parents were warned she might not survive the journey to Oxford where she was later to be hospitalised for this life-saving operation.

The surgeon told the Mirror the key thing is that a patient keeps his own heart; the inflammation and swelling of Julie's heart muscle was blocking the blood vessels.

The device works by being hooked up to the main arteries supplying the heart, pumping blood around the body and allowing the organ to be kept alive, but without having to do any work so that it can recover independently.

Developed over seven years and costing £3,000, the device is relatively inexpensive compared with other artificial hearts.

'Taleban chief orders release of 105 opposition prisoners'

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — The Taleban militia's top leader Mullah Mohammad Omar Tuesday ordered the freeing of 105 prisoners belonging to different opposition groups, the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) reported.

The prisoners will be released Wednesday from jails in the southern city of Kandahar, the base of the Islamic militia, the Pakistan-based private agency said, citing a statement by Omar.

AIP quoted Omar as saying the release of the opposition soldiers was a "unilateral" gesture by the Islamic militia.

The men were captured by Taleban in the provinces of Faryab, Sare Pul, Juzjan and Balkh, according to the statement.

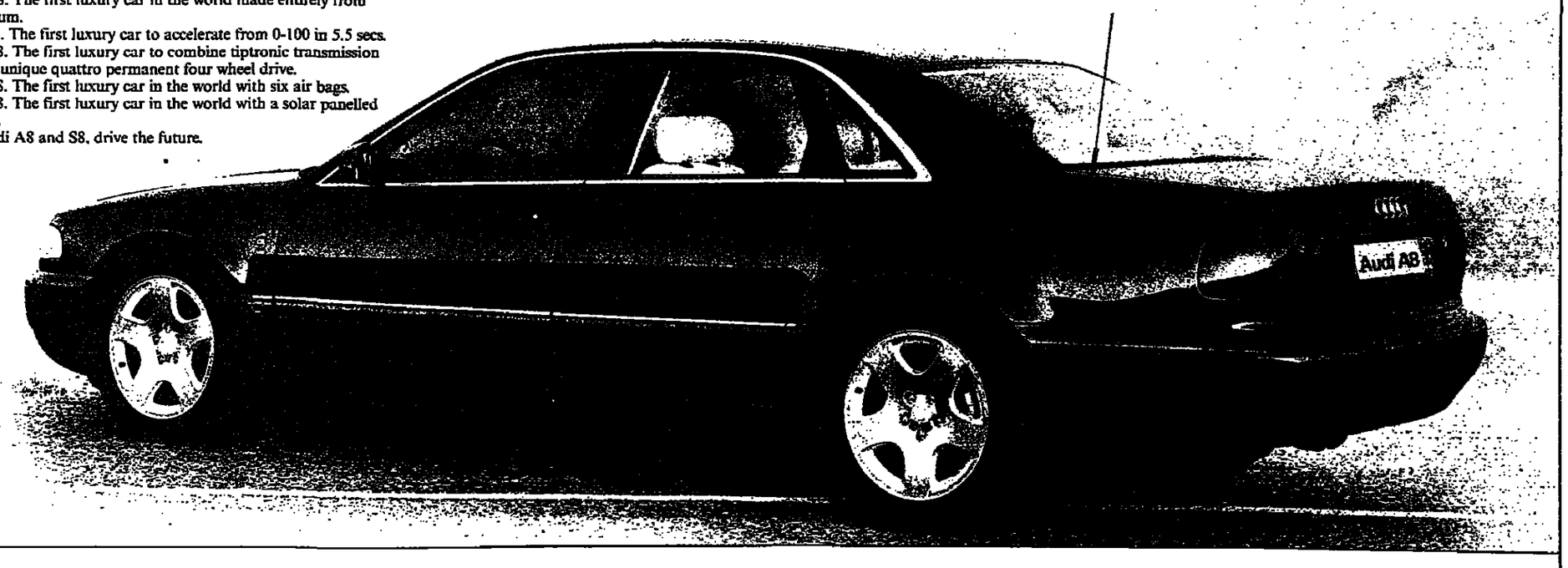
AIP said the Taleban and opposition forces loyal to commander Ahmad Shah Masood appeared to be observing an unofficial truce for the exchange of prisoners as the frontlines remained calm.

A week-long ceasefire that was mediated by a Saudi Arabia-based Afghan intellectual, Sayed Jalal, for the swap of prisoners expired Monday.

A senior Taleban spokesman Wakil Ahmad told AFP on Monday there was no agreement yet to extend the truce but Taleban were willing to discuss this so the two sides could exchange prisoners.



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Equitable solution needed

AS THE U.N. Security Council weighs options in response to Iraq's recent decision to stop cooperating with the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM), the international community must continue to find an equitable resolution of the on-again off-again standoff. Technically speaking Baghdad is in breach of the 1991 Security Council ceasefire resolution, but it has, nevertheless, some legitimate concerns and grievances that warrant consideration. The resolution in question is not so clear-cut that it is not open for new interpretation. At a time when Washington has hinted on more than one occasion that the sanctions slammed on Iraq would not necessarily be lifted once Baghdad gets a clean bill of health on its biological, chemical and nuclear arms programme, the Iraqi government must have been driven to the conclusion that there is really no pay-off for its cooperation with UNSCOM no matter how complete it may get.

The U.S. and Britain in particular have construed the Security Council resolution as to entail endless other demands on Iraq. The incentive for further cooperation with UNSCOM was obviously dealt a severe blow when the Iraqis were pushed to the conclusion that no amount of cooperation would relieve them from the crippling sanctions. Unless the major players in the Iraqi situation amend their perspective, as indeed U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan once suggested, the Iraqi people will become totally exasperated in their dealing with the world.

Richard Butler, the U.N. chief inspector, is clearly part of the problem. That Butler's relations with the Iraqi authorities are tense and shrouded with suspicion, is reason enough to question his continued leadership of UNSCOM. At best, his leadership is counterproductive. You do not seek cooperation by imposing on the other party interlocutors who do not seem to be able to strike a chord of harmony. The fact that some of UNSCOM personnel were found spying for Israel makes it imperative that the entire UNSCOM mission be reviewed and placed in more neutral hands.

Iraq is entitled to a timetable for lifting the punitive sanctions. After eight years of the conflict, the Iraqi people are also entitled to normalcy in their lives so that they may go on developing their country as all other nations do. Under the circumstances, there is a cause to believe that the much talked about reconsideration of the entire Iraqi file is overdue. Since the Security Council and Iraq are still at loggerheads with no end in sight, it may be useful to consider another U.N. forum to intervene. The U.N. General Assembly is the best candidate, with its clear and established precedents to intervene when the council's approach to conflict resolution appear deadlocked or futile.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fahed Fanek commented on Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah's visit to the United States and described it as successful. The visit was aimed at personal as well as national interests, said Fanek. The United States believe that Prince Abdullah is an Arab national who sympathises with certain Arab regimes not on good terms with Washington, said Fanek. He said the Saudi crown prince wanted to assure the American administration that their interests will not be jeopardised. Fanek said Washington, as much as Prince Abdullah, needed this assurance, because the U.S. needs Saudi oil, and Saudi Arabia is able to strike a good deal for both parties: it can offer American companies privileges for establishing ventures to develop the petroleum industry in Saudi — an assurance for American interests which in turn will benefit Saudi Arabia in terms of American technology.

Al Dustour's editorial lashed out at Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu for hindering the peace drive by delaying the implementation of the Wye River accord while continuing to give permissions for settlement building on occupied Arab land. The paper said it was ironic that the same day Israel was supposed to start withdrawing from the West Bank in accordance with the agreement, Israeli bulldozers started the construction of a settlement in occupied Jerusalem and the expansion of another in Hebron. The Wye River agreement stipulates that none of the parties (the Palestinian National Authority and Israel) can initiate a move that might negatively affect negotiations on final status. But Netanyahu, said the Arab daily, had as usual violated the agreement with not even an attempt to hide the fact. The paper charged that the Israeli move is a challenge to the United States which sponsored the negotiations, and could tarnish America's reputation if the U.S. proves unable to guarantee the implementation of the accord.

Washington Watch

Dr. James J. Zogby

Civil rights, Middle East top priorities

AS AN American political constituency, Arab Americans have two major sets of issues that drive the community's agenda: civil rights and U.S. policy in the Middle East. This was one of the findings of a poll just completed by the Arab-American Institute (AAI) and ana Television Network, Inc.

The AAI/ana poll randomly surveyed 454 Arab American registered voters from across the United States. It was conducted between October 23 and October 27 and had a margin of error of +/- 3%.

Because Arab Americans retain strong personal ties with the Arab World, Middle East issues are of great importance to the community. Of those polled, one-third were born in the Middle East, two-thirds still have family and friends in the region and two-thirds have travelled to the Middle East.

As a result, 64 per cent of Arab Americans stated that how congressional and Senate candidates stand on Middle East issues is important to winning their support.

When asked to evaluate the importance of a number of foreign policy issues, the Arab American voters responded as follows:

	Important	Not Important
1. The Rights of Palestinians	85.5	3.5
2. Protecting Lebanese Sovereignty	84	10.5
3. Human Rights in the Arab World	80	7.5
4. The Status of Jerusalem	75	11

As the numbers indicate, Arab Americans have strong views, as well, about a number of critical Middle East issues.

In addition to the data above, the poll also shows that 80 percent of Arab Americans agree that there should be a Palestinian state, with only 12 per cent disagreeing. At the same time 74 per cent feel that Israel has a right to exist, with only 14 per cent disagreeing. There is a strong consensus (cutting across all the different component groups within the community) on this issue and the issues of Palestinian rights, Jerusalem, Lebanon and human rights in the Arab World. The only issue on which there is not a community-wide consensus is on the question of ending the economic sanctions against Iraq. On this issue 46 percent of the Arab Americans polled would agree with ending the sanctions while 42 per cent would not.

With regard to U.S. policy in the Middle East, 72.5 percent feel that the policy is biased toward Israel. A slightly more positive view is held of the Clinton Administration's handling of the Middle East peace negotiations. Fifty-three per cent hold a favourable view of the administration's work, while 31 per cent do not.

The AAI/ana poll also found that civil rights concerns were high on the Arab American agenda in 1998. Among the issues that the Arab American voters ranked as important were:

	I	N.I.
a) Civil Rights of Arab Americans	91	3.5
b) Keeping Immigration Open & Fair	82.5	4.5
c) Supporting Arab Americans in Elections	76	8

The civil rights issue ranks the highest possibly because the poll shows that a disturbingly large number of Arab Americans (31 per cent) responded that they "have been discriminated against because of their ancestry." The AAI/ana poll also asked Arab Americans to indicate political party registration and party preference in the upcoming election. Thirty-seven per cent of the Arab Americans polled were registered Democrats, 24 per cent were Republicans and 15 per cent declared themselves Independent.

However, when asked how they intended to vote in this year's congressional elections, 53 per cent indicated preference for a Democratic candidate while only 29 per cent supported a Republican.

The Arab American voters polled have strong views on the current crisis in Washington, expressing support for the president in numbers roughly paralleling the rest of the U.S. public.

Thirty-eight per cent say that the president should be left alone, while 19 per cent say that the president should be censured but remain in office. Thus, a total of 57 per cent would see the president finishing his term. This contrasts favourably with the 37.5 per cent who indicated a desire to see the President removed from office (21% favouring impeachment and 16.5% per cent favouring resignation).

In attempting to assist Arab American voters make their 1998 vote an educated one, the Arab American Institute published a congressional Score Card this year. The score card presents the records of every member of Congress including all 435 members of the House on nine key domestic and foreign policy issues of importance to the community. More than 40 of the members have extremely positive records and most of them come from districts where there are strong Arab American voter concentrations and where Arab Americans are active in politics.

Arab Americans can have their concerns met and play a positive role in shaping U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East — but to do so they must continue to bring those concerns into the electoral politics of America as they will on November 3.

LETTERS

Negative vision

To the editor:

I READ Gershon Sneirson's letter regarding Sanchez Rashid's response to Ray Hanania's article. I agree with Sneirson about the need to transcend stereotypes. Hollywood is not exclusively owned by any group: not by Jews, nor by Arabs. Realisations like this are important.

Note, however, that Sneirson taints his call for informed knowledge when he himself also makes a misleading generalisation when he asks "Why do Arabs (and some Israelis) constantly see sinister conspiratorial forces behind everything from the diminishing quantity of sheets in packages of toilet paper to the abject portrayals of certain ethnic characters in some Hollywood films?" The wording of his question suggests that all Arabs make generalisations: note that he did not say some Arabs.

Not all Arabs adhere to conspiracy theories and this is evidenced by the increasing, though still small, volume of creative and informed thinking and writing which has emerged in many Arab publications.

Furthermore, we have to make clear the fact that Arabs have not been portrayed favourably in Hollywood. This is what I think Ray Hanania was talking about. It is tragic, for example, that no major Hollywood motion picture has been made about the immense human suffering of the Palestinian people. The possibilities to produce an engaging film on this subject are endless and yet it has not been done on a large scale. My youthful optimism leads me to think that there will one day be an epic, moving movie about Palestine: perhaps about a love lost, a home broken or a family torn. Maybe this would reach out and touch people.

Every effort to inform and to relay truth or opinion is important. Every effort counts. Too often, we Arabs have dismissed the potential for literature, for poetry, for music to positively affect people's lives. This can be seen today when so many parents bar their college bound children from the vast realms of literature and the humanities. Have we forgotten the lyrics of Um Koulthoum, or the verses of Darwish, or the lines of Said?

Not only is this voice barred from within but we also face a foreign world which in its films, in its books, in its newspapers, has read and heard the other side, but has not seen us except through the prism of generalisation and prejudice. We have become only negatively visible, as Edward Said and Ray Hanania, among others, readily point out.

Our image is governed, then, by two factors: by our own failures and by external prejudice. To concentrate on any one factor and to deny the other will lead us nowhere.

Marwan Daoud Hanania,
Undergraduate,
Cornell University,
Ithaca, NY.

The Wye River memorandum and human rights

Human Rights Watch press release

HUMAN RIGHTS and security concerns are in no way mutually exclusive.

Unfortunately, this point appears to have been forgotten during the negotiation of the Wye River memorandum, signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation on October 23. Instead the memorandum presents human rights as an afterthought, without any provisions for monitoring or enforcing human rights standards. Human Rights Watch believes that the U.S., as a party to the memorandum's negotiation and the party designated to monitor its implementation, has a special responsibility to clarify the obligation of all parties to prevent human rights violations. That responsibility must include monitoring of and reporting on all parties' human rights performance.

What the memorandum says:

1. HUMAN RIGHTS: The history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is replete with serious human rights violations — including arbitrary arrest, torture, and unfair trials — that the parties have tried to justify by invoking security concerns. Instead of creating strong mechanisms to prevent such violations, many sections of the Wye River Memorandum can be read as encouraging them. Much of the document's language relating to security is broad and categorical, as in the requirement that the Palestinian side pursue a policy of "zero tolerance for terror and violence" and that both sides "take all measures necessary in order to prevent acts of terrorism, crime and hostilities." Without a countervailing emphasis on human rights, such language suggests that any and all measures, whether or not they accord with the parties' human rights obligations and the fundamental principles they have pledged to respect, are justified in the fight to eliminate armed attacks against civilians. Those who drafted and signed this new agreement therefore have a responsibility to make clear that meeting legitimate security needs should not be a rationale for violating human rights.

Article II (C) (4) of the memorandum contains the only explicit reference to human rights and the rule of law: Pursuant to Article XI (1) of Annex I of the [1995 Israeli-Palestinian] Interim Agreement, and without derogating from the above, the Palestinian police will exercise powers and responsibilities to implement this memorandum with due regard to internationally accepted norms of human rights and the rule of law, and will be guided by the need to protect the public, respect human dignity, and avoid harassment.

This language is ambiguous and incomplete. First, it applies only to the Palestinian police, omitting other Palestinian agencies and all Israeli agencies. In addition, the article's inclusion of the phrase "without derogating from the above" — that is, without derogating from the security obligations described in the previous sections of the document — seems to imply that compliance with human rights standards is secondary to security concerns.

Any such blanket subordination of human rights to security conflicts with international law norms that clearly indicate the limited circumstances in which departures from human rights standards are allowable. For example, even during "times of public emergency which threaten the life of the nation," Article 4 of the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) allows only very limited restrictions on rights, and only "to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation." The ICCPR also expressly prohibits any departure, under any circumstances, from certain fundamental guarantees such as the prohibition of torture. Israel and the United States have both ratified the ICCPR, and the Palestinian authorities have indicated their willingness to comply with the treaty while awaiting statehood.

2. TORTURE AND UNFAIR TRIALS: Article II (C) (3) sets a twelve-week deadline for responses to requests for "arrest and transfer of suspects and defendants pursuant to Article II (7) of Annex IV" of the 1995 Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip (the Interim Agreement). This clause applies primarily to transfer requests made by Israel, because the Interim Agreement only allows the transfer of non-Israelis to Palestinian custody. Although press reports have indicated that Israel dropped its request for the transfer of some Palestinian suspects in exchange for the Palestinian Authority agreeing to bring them to trial, this is not reflected in the language of the memorandum. Since the Interim Agreement requires the parties to "effect the arrest and transfer" upon receipt of a request, Article II (C) (3) increases the likelihood that Palestinian suspects will be subject to arbitrary arrest, torture, and summary trials.

Despite the presence of a human rights clause in Article XI (1) of Annex I of the Interim Agreement, Human Rights Watch and other human rights organisations have extensive documentation of the use of torture during interrogation and of unfair trials in both Israel and under the Palestinian Authority since the signing of that agreement. In May and July the treaty monitoring bodies of the Convention Against Torture and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights found Israel to violate those treaties' prohibition on torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, based on its use of torture during interrogation and its use of administrative detention and detention by military order, practices which lacked provisions for effective judicial review. Human Rights Watch believes that Article II (C) (3) may lead to the transfer of detainees to a state where they risk torture, as well as possibly encouraging the Palestinian Authority to engage in arbitrary arrests, arbitrary detentions, and unfair trials.

3. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION: Article II (A) (3) states that "the Palestinian side will issue a decree prohibiting all forms of incitement to violence or terror, and establishing mechanisms for acting systematically against all expressions or threats of violence or terror." It also creates an U.S.-Palestinian-Israeli committee, staffed by media specialists, law enforcement representatives, educational specialists, and current or former elected officials. This committee is to "monitor cases of possible incitement to violence or terror and make recommendations and reports on how to prevent such incitement." The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights places strict limits on the range of permissible interference with the rights it guarantees.

While Article 20 of the ICCPR requires states to prohibit incitement to violence, such prohibitions must be narrowly tailored in light of the fundamental right to free expression protected in Article 19, which specifies that restrictions on the right to freedom of expression are only allowed in pursuit of a limited set of goals, and only when such restrictions are necessary for ensuring their achievement. The United Nations Human Rights Committee, which monitors the ICCPR, has further emphasised that such restrictions "may not put in jeopardy the right itself." Human Rights Watch and other human rights organisations have documented many Palestinian Authority violations of press freedom and freedom of expression, including the closure of media outlets and the arrest of journalists and writers who have published stories critical of the Palestinian Authority. We are concerned that the vague language of "prohibiting all forms of incitement" may become an excuse for further violations of the right to legitimate political expression. Already freedom of expression violations have increased sharply since the signing of the Wye River memorandum.

4. THE ROLE OF THE CIA: The Wye River memorandum sets up U.S.-Palestinian and U.S.-Palestinian-Israeli committees to monitor implementation, including committees that "monitor cases of possible incitement" and "review and evaluate information pertinent to the decisions on prosecution, punishment or other legal measures which affect the status of individuals suspected of abetting or perpetrating acts of violence and terror." Officials of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) will represent the U.S. on these committees. The CIA has in the past frequently tolerated gross human rights violations by security forces and groups it monitored or aided, as in Honduras, and has itself been implicated in human rights violations, most recently in Haiti.

Human Rights Watch strongly recommends that the mandate of committees set up to monitor implementation of the memorandum includes monitoring of human rights violations by all sides. U.S. representation should not be limited to CIA personnel, and all U.S. representatives should have training in monitoring human rights violations. U.S. committee members should be required to report all human rights violations to the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labour, and this information should be made public and included in the Department of State's annual country reports on human rights.

Recommendations for implementation:

Israeli and Palestinian security forces have a responsibility to protect the public, and human rights standards should not be used to excuse negligence or lack of political will in discharging this responsibility. However, the main danger is not excessive concern for human rights and rule of law by security forces and political leaders, but the opposite: a sense of dispensation from human rights norms in implementing "all measures necessary" to prevent acts of violence.

Human Rights Watch calls upon all parties named in the Wye River memorandum to:

Clarify their understanding that the security obligations outlined in the memorandum must be met in a manner that is consistent with international human rights standards, and that the language of Article II (C) (4) is to be read as supplementary to Article XI(1) of Annex I of the Interim Agreement, which acknowledges the respect due international human rights standards in the exercise of both Israel and Palestinian responsibilities.

Clarify their understanding that Article II (A) (3)'s requirement to prohibit "all forms of incitement to violence or terror" and to take actions "against all expressions or threats of violence or terror" must be implemented in accordance with the norms of international human rights law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Take all possible steps to ensure that individuals detained for security reasons are not subject to torture or ill-treatment. These steps should include monitoring the conditions of the detainees' interrogation and detention. In the event that such persons are transferred by either Israel or the Palestinian Authority, all parties should seek assurances that the government receiving the suspect will honour the prohibition in international human rights law against returning a person to a place where there are substantial grounds for believing he would be in danger of being subjected to torture.

Human Rights Watch calls on the United States to: Ensure that U.S. representatives monitoring the memorandum's implementation also monitor human rights violations by all sides. All such information should be forwarded on a regular basis to the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labour, and should be made public and included in the Department of State's annual country reports on human rights.

Ensure that at least one of the U.S. representatives on the Trilateral Committee, described in paragraph II (A) (3) (b), has a strong background in human rights law and experience in defending freedom of expression and association.

هكذا منذ الأصل

Jordan-U.S. ties and the importance of people-to-people links

The following is the text of a speech made by United States ambassador to Jordan, William J. Burns, at the combined Rotary clubs meeting on Nov. 2.

I WOULD like to begin by extending a sincere thanks to the Rotary clubs of Amman who have invited me here tonight to share some thoughts with you on the enduring relationship between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. I am honoured that you have welcomed me back to Jordan in so fine a fashion. I am honoured also to speak before a group that has such an impressive record of community service, whether through local programmes such as equipping a tuberculosis lab for the Ministry of Health, or global programmes like eradicating polio by the year 2000.

A few months ago, I returned to work in Jordan for the first time since 1984, when I completed my assignment in the political section in our embassy near the Third Circle. Since my return, I have not had the chance to visit the old embassy building, which, as you know, is now the Hotel Carlton. So I don't know whether guests are now paying $100 a night to sleep in my old office. I used to sleep there for free.

I have found it very satisfying to return to Jordan to renew old acquaintances, to marvel once again at Jordan's historical treasures and to view first hand Jordan's ongoing development. Many of my introductory visits to Jordanian institutions, have, in fact, been re-introductions to friends and places that made a deep impression on me more than a decade ago. Time and again I am struck not only by how familiar things are, but also by how much has changed. While I found it hard to recognise any of the buildings at Yarmouk University last week, for example, the warm greeting I received brought back memories of Irbid in the early 80s.

Returning to Jordan as my country's ambassador, it is clear that one thing has not changed in 50 years. And that is the importance of the relationship between the United States and Jordan. It is an enduring relationship based on our deep, long-standing, shared interest in regional peace and prosperity. No one has worked harder, and no one has done more, than His Majesty King Hussein to advance the cause of peace in the Middle East. I know I am speaking on behalf of President Clinton and all Americans in expressing my wish for His Majesty's full and speedy recovery.

Tonight, as I consider my main objectives as American ambassador, it seems to me that there are four areas in which we should concentrate our efforts to deepen the relationship between the United States and Jordan: first, further strengthening our partnership in pursuit of comprehensive regional peace; second, bolstering security cooperation between our two countries; third, broadening our efforts to increase economic opportunities for all Jordanians; and fourth, expanding the people-to-people and human ties which are the true foundation of lasting friendship between us. Let me briefly address each of those goals.

Partnership for regional peace

Last week's Wye River agreement between Palestinians and Israelis demonstrated several enduring realities about the peace process and the value of U.S.-Jordanian partnership. It demonstrated, as vividly as any event I can imagine, the unique courage and vision which His Majesty King Hussein has brought to this effort for decades. We look forward to continuing to work closely with His Majesty and with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, who remains a very able partner for King Hussein, as well as for the United States.

The Wye agreement also demonstrated that Palestinians and Israelis, despite substantial differences and deep mistrust, want to find alternatives to conflict and recognise that the negotiating process launched at Madrid and Oslo still offers hope and practical solutions. The Wye agreement is another step on that road, and it brings tangible benefits to both sides. But it is only one step. Implementation will not be easy; there will be more violence, and extremists from both sides will test the political courage and commitment of Israeli and Palestinian leaders. Those leaders made hard choices at Wye Plantation, and they will continue to have to make hard choices if that agreement is to be implemented, and if permanent status negotiations are to have any chance of success.

The Wye agreement demonstrated another reality: it is true that only the parties to the conflict can make the hard decisions needed for peace, but it is equally true that active American diplomacy is an essential ingredient in the peace process. President Clinton and Secretary Albright could not have made their commitment to Middle East peace any clearer than they did over nine intensive days at Wye Plantation. We remain committed to doing everything we can in the weeks and months ahead. If the process falters, it will not be for lack of high-level effort or will on our part.

Finally, the Wye agreement was a reminder that true peace in the region must be just, lasting and comprehensive. Towards that end, as we pursue implementation of the Wye agreement and the opening of permanent status talks on the Palestinian-Israeli track, we will also seek to revive movement on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. We are prepared to work just as hard on those tracks as we have in Palestinian-Israeli negotiations.

The Arab-Israeli conflict is not the only challenge we face to peace and stability in the region. Saddam Hussein's refusal to meet his obligations to the U.N. Security Council and the U.N. secretary general only prolongs Iraq's isolation. I do not know why he has chosen to defy the United Nations just when the Security Council has offered the comprehensive review he has been seeking — but I know, as the Security Council unanimously reaffirmed yesterday, that the only pathway out of isolation and sanctions is compliance with U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Enhancing security cooperation

Let me now turn from diplomatic challenges to security cooperation. In a neighbourhood as complicated and dangerous as the Middle East, the role that Jordan plays as a force for peace and stability has long been appreciated by the United States. We enjoy an excellent security partnership. Over the past four years, the United States has provided a $220 million F-16 aircraft programme to the Royal Jordanian Air Force. Another $100 million worth of field ready equipment, including tanks, helicopters and armoured personnel carriers, was provided to the Jordanian Armed Forces through a special assistance package authorised for Jordan by President Clinton.

Our bilateral military relationship is about more than just armaments. It involves personal relationships between our two armed forces that span decades. Our two militaries train together in joint exercises that enhance the professionalism and capabilities of everyone involved. Two hundred Jordanian soldiers study in the U.S. every year, the second largest foreign military training programme that we have in the world. Selected American officers also take courses with their Jordanian counterparts here in Jordan. I am certain that this close cooperation will continue and deepen in the years ahead.

Building economic opportunities

Real security, however, entails much more than military preparedness. Economic security and economic opportunity underlie the stability of any society. The United States is committed to helping Jordan grow and compete successfully in the global economy.

While assistance figures are not the true measure of any relationship, Jordan's position as the fifth largest recipient of U.S. assistance in the world is an indication of how deeply committed the administration and Congress are to Jordan's well being. In 1998, Congress approved a total of $225 million in security and economic grant assistance to Jordan. Since 1990 American assistance to Jordan has totalled over $2.2 billion. We have also forgiven more than $700 million in Jordanian official debt.

For nearly 50 years, USAID has made contributions to Jordan's economy and infrastructure, ranging from water treatment plants to roads and schools and clinics. More recently, we have launched new initiatives aimed at generating Jordanian jobs and exports. Last week, for example, I signed an agreement with the Jordanian government which establishes a Jordan-U.S. Business Partnership programme. This innovative $15 million project will provide small and medium-sized Jordanian companies with advice on how to improve their planning, product quality and market skills. We have also created a programme to make "microfinance" loans available to small enterprises throughout Jordan, some employing only one or two workers, who are unable to find financing anywhere else.

As proud as I am of our efforts to provide economic and security assistance to Jordan, I know that the lifeblood of sustainable economic growth is investment, not assistance. I was very pleased two weeks ago to witness the signing of a $120 million joint venture with an American company — Albemarle Holdings — which is the largest single American investment ever made in Jordan. This venture will create 150 permanent jobs for Jordanians by developing Dead Sea mineral resources. It is a powerful example of what we can do together — and an example I would be happy to see repeated again and again: in minerals, in energy, in telecommunications, in textiles or in tourism.

Building bridges between people

Cooperation between our two governments in the pursuit of regional peace, enhanced security and increased economic opportunities have been three very visible features of the Jordanian-American relationship for decades. But there is also a fourth, more human, dimension of our partnership, one not measured in peace agreements signed or dollars spent on assistance programme or high-level visits exchanged by our leaders. It is the gradual emergence over many years of people-to-people links between individual Americans and Jordanians — from the tens of thousands of Jordanians who have studied in the United States to American Fulbright scholars and archaeologists and Peace Corps volunteers who come to Jordan and leave deeply impressed by the richness of its history and the warmth of its people.

We have much to learn from each other if we set aside the myths that each has built up about the other and take the time to listen. I know I still have a lot to learn about Jordan, and I hope to continue to travel throughout the country to try to understand it better. I thank you tonight for giving me the chance to meet you, and I think it is now time for me to practice what I was just preaching and stop talking and listen to your comments and questions.

Let me conclude simply by saying that I know the road ahead for Jordan and the United States in this region will not be easy. It never has been. We will face difficulties, and we will have differences, as friends often do. But history has shown how much we can accomplish when we work together, and I am confident that as we approach the beginning of a new century the best days of our partnership are still to come.

Global Village

Reactions to colonialism as confusion spreads

By John Gay Yoh

Editors note: This is the second of a three-part series examining Euro-African relationship, the hangover from colonialism, and the steps forward for the African continent, so often neglected and forgotten.

AS WE have seen, the Western attitude towards Africa, in the last two centuries, was characterised by a superiority complex. But, how did African intellectuals of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries think of European culture and what were their reactions to Western colonialism? Like other peoples at different times in history, Africans began their assessment of the West — Europe and North America — by classifying the Westerners they first met and fitting them into a pattern alongside other people. We read for example several historical works in which African writers describe their resistance to and confrontation with the West. It is to be mentioned however, that the African confrontational approach to Western civilisation was based on the reality of the Western presence in African lands. And the major question which had to be answered was how to deal with it and how it could be resisted. The attempts to answer such questions prompted instead other controversial questions such as: What foreign values and norms are worth adopting? What indigenous norms are worth preserving? Attempts to answer such questions led to an inevitable dilemma. For one, the West came to Africa, not as a culture, as erroneously exerted by most historians, rather it came as a combination of traders and soldiers, to be followed later by Christian missionaries. This process was much the same in all African colonies whether under Britain, Belgium, France, Germany, or Portugal.

The then common pattern of African reaction to the Western colonialism was either to welcome one or all of the above groups, or else, try to get rid of them. In both cases, the reaction resulted in compromise and acknowledgement of the power element involved in any attempt to resist the militarised Western colonialism. Thus, the nationalists' reaction was either con, pro, or indecisive. The second pattern of African reaction to the European presence appeared in the lifestyle of the African leaders of the time. In what turned out to be a swept cultural interaction, each individual educated person or leader had to make day-to-day decision about his own behaviour as to wear European shoes or African? To become Christian or not? If so, what kind of Christian? What resulted in reality was a complete culturral confusion. In fact, in those days, and even today, a rural inhabitant may want to have the society to benefit from industrial revolution, but may not show that interest, for the lack of resources enough even to buy a bicycle. A city dweller may accept Christianity and still retain his African religion secretly.

The third pattern of reaction was, rather than expressing or wondering about the essence of the Western culture, some African academicians decided to take on new modes of thought, armed with a new perception of research that resulted from new data introduced by the Westerners who lived in Africa. As it turned out later, much of what has been written on Africa was by Western colonisers and African students in European universities, theologians, historians, anthropologists etc. It is to be emphasised here that cultural "borrowings" from the West, were reinterpreted and in a sense de-Westernised, if you like. It was not a matter of choice between being traditional or Western. It was likely because most African intellectuals of the time knew that not all aspects of Western culture neither were necessary nor sufficient conditions for modernisation.

As mentioned earlier, African intellectuals of the last three centuries reacted in different ways to the Western influence on them. For example, Rev. Philip Puague of the eighteenth century Gold Coast (Ghana), who, having lived in England from the age 13 until he was 25, returned home refusing to communicate in his mother tongue without an interpreter. Other African intellectuals who wanted to depart from traditional values started communist movements in Africa, whose model was not the USSR, but a classless society. Then there were those Africans who wanted modern society with industrial technology and high levels of consumption, while continuing to preserve some part of their traditional values.

There were also those Africans who wanted to preserve their culture as it was or return to a remembered past before the Western impact. But it seems that this school had few advocates at the time.

In addition to the above schools of thought, there were those Africans who wanted to preserve as much as possible of the traditional way of life, though realising the necessity of modernisation: groups like "Native Authorities" in northern Nigeria, people like Apolo Kagwa and the Christian revolutionaries in Buganda (Uganda). This attitude of "change from within the system" was probably the dominant African response to the West among African leaders involved with colonial regimes under one form of indirect rule or other.

The writer is a visiting fellow at the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies in Amman.

The Saudi nurse freed into a prison called suspicion



By Margarette Driscoll

IT IS Deborah Parry's 40th birthday today, but the meal at a hotel planned to celebrate the event has been cancelled. The nurse found guilty of murdering a colleague in Saudi Arabia and imprisoned for it was supposed to have won her freedom when she and Lucille McLauchlan, convicted as an accessory to the crime, were released and returned to Britain in a blaze of publicity in May. Six months on, however, it seems that Parry has effectively swapped one prison for another.

Although her sister Sandra's neat, brick-built, detached house in Alton, Hampshire, bears no resemblance to her claustrophobic cell in Dhahran, she lives under a regime of self-imposed isolation. At home and at Holy Cross hospital, Haslemere, Surrey, she feels safe. But even the drive to and from work seems an ordeal, so aware is she of the stares of those who weigh her up and wonder whether she committed the murder.

Thanks to diplomatic pressure — rather than proof of their innocence — Parry and her cellmate were freed after spending 18 months in prison. "Blood money" was paid to the victim's relatives in return for their agreement not to insist on the death sentence.

Now Parry sometimes despairs of ever being able to clear her name. "It is hard to explain... when you feel that other people suspect or might feel badly toward you, it does something to you inside," she says. "In my situation how do you prove your innocence 100 per cent? It's not possible. It's something that I have to learn to live with but I still find it hard to accept."

Much of her anxiety, she knows, is not logical, even laughable. Her sister tells her it is a self-fulfilling prophecy: She looks around anxiously and people stare back, not thinking, "Oh, it's Deborah Parry," but, "who's that strange girl staring at me?"

Still, she feels vulnerable, perhaps more so now than any time since she returned home. The U.K. Central Council, nursing's governing body, is considering a complaint that could result in her being struck off the nursing register. Today's birthday lunch was cancelled in the wake of a television documentary last week about Frank Gilford, brother of Yvonne, the victim, which painted a damning picture of her alleged involvement in the crime.

Next month a book by Lucille McLauchlan, Trial by Ordeal, One Nurse's Hell in a Saudi Jail, is to be published and advance snatches suggest it will not be complimentary. McLauchlan apparently describes Parry as a "snob" who was "selfish and egocentric." They no longer speak.

McLauchlan says there was a culture clash "between me, a working-class girl from Dundee, and Parry, the boarding-school girl from England." In fact, Parry attended a convent, not a boarding school, but you get the picture.

Parry would "scream and throw things" during visits: "Any kind of stress and you couldn't rely on her to act rationally." Parry does her best to smile, though she is dreading the new wave of publicity that will accompany the book. "Lucy's opinion is her opinion and she's entitled to it," she says carefully. "We are very different. Lucy swears a lot, but that's Lucy. It is true that I did not cope with prison well. I was so depressed that I was on medication.

"When I heard on the radio that I might be sentenced to death I had a panic attack. Towards the end I was on a drip every couple of days because my blood pressure and my blood sugar kept dropping."

Since her return she has tried to piece together some sort of sane, low-profile life. In the early days she had treatment for post-traumatic stress. The big breakthrough was being offered a job at Holy Cross, a private hospital where she worked as a newly qualified nurse at the age of 21 and was regarded as "capable and caring."

Back in uniform, she felt like herself again for the first time in almost two years. It was "marvellous" to be back on the wards "and see some familiar faces." She soon settled into the routine, nursing patients with brain injuries and those in for detoxification.

Then a patient complained, and George Galloway, MP for Glasgow Kelvin, became involved, asking the health secretary to "forbid this grisly appointment." When the UKCC began looking into the matter Galloway offered no evidence and the Saudi Arabian authorities refused even to confirm that she was convicted, so it appears there is no case to answer.

Still, Parry fears being struck off. Working with animals is an option, she muses, which makes her sister raise her eyebrows. Deborah is "animal-mad." If she had her way, says Sandra, the house would be full of cats.

As it is, they have one — Willow, a tabby. "When she was out in Saudi, I kept telling her we'd get her home. 'How can I prove to you I'm serious?' I said once. She said, 'get a cat.' So we did. Willow was a year old by the time she came home."

The hamsters in the neat cage in the family living room are her seven-year-old nephew's pets but the goldfish belong to Parry, who is in some ways the family's fifth child. Sandra, older by two years, has taken on the role of her mother, who died almost 20 years ago. Old friends have been supportive but Sandra is worried. Her fragile sister, always highly strung, is "very low" and has become a "little hermit." Apart from work, Parry hardly goes out, and turns down all invitations.

What really happened in Saudi remains a mystery. Yvonne Gilford was found dead in her flat in the compound of the King Fahd hospital, Dhahran, on the morning of December 13, 1996. She had died after a fearful struggle, stabbed in the chest, back and neck. Six days later, while the two British nurses were out shopping together, Parry went to buy food for her cat. McLauchlan went to the bank and tried to use Gilford's credit card to withdraw cash.

Both women were arrested. That night McLauchlan made a confession saying she had seen Parry stab Gilford. Five days later Parry confessed, though both women have always insisted they were intimidated into making false statements.

Rumour and gossip — always rife in the confines of the hospital compound — flourished. On the documentary last week former colleagues talked of Parry's anxiety after the murder and, more damningly, spoke of scratches on her hands and arms. A hairdresser said she saw clumps of hair missing from her head.

Parry says there is a simple explanation: The scratches — small, light scratches on her left hand — were caused by her cat. But the story of the scratches has become ever more elaborate with the telling. Parry was interviewed by the police the day after the murder wearing a short-sleeved abaya, the Islamic robe the nurses wore in public. If she had "scores" on her forearms and clumps of hair missing, she asks, might the police not have noticed?

The hairdressing appointment in question took place in November, before the murder. And in any case, the hair found clasped in Gilford's hand was fair, some of it 9cm long. Parry's was dark-brown and cropped. But despite these inconsistencies, under Saudi law confession closes the case.

It is, perhaps, not surprising that Parry overreacted to hearing of a sudden and violent death, given the litany of tragedy in her own life. It began in 1978, when her 16-year-old brother was killed in a motorcycle accident. Ten months later her mother drowned. Then her father died of a heart attack and her sister Sandra's first husband dropped dead of a cerebral aneurysm, aged 32. Parry herself was involved in a serious car accident and almost died. She went to Saudi to escape a failing love affair.

Although Parry is staunchly supported by her sister and brother-in-law Jonathan Ashbee, who campaigned for her release, the strain is beginning to tell on them all.

At 1 a.m., after the documentary, Parry was still wondering how she could face people at work. When Sandra collected her children from school next day she could feel tension in the air.

One of the children was once asked: "Has your auntie had her head cut off, then?" Another, says Sandra, caught the television news and ran into the kitchen saying: "But Auntie Debbie wouldn't hurt anyone."

Parry nods silently at the assertion. But can she ever make people believe it is true?

— The Sunday Times

Middle class contracts around the world as economy goes global

MEXICO CITY (AP) — For 14 years, labour lawyer Patricia Navarro handled some of Mexico's hottest television stars.

Today, she represents dozens of workers laid off by the broadcasting giant Televisa.

Navarro gets more than 30 phone calls a day from recently laid off Televisa employees who are in fights over severance pay.

"People are terrified," she said. "It used to be a good company to work for. After those salaries and benefits, it's not easy finding anything that comes close."

Middle class people in Mexico and all around the globe are being squeezed out of once-comfortable lifestyles — and in many cases their jobs — by the crisis in an increasingly globalised economy.

In recent years, developing nations have begun toppling protectionist trade barriers and opening up their economies to their regions and the world.

But while free trade policies have increased, commerce among nations, many national economies are now more vulnerable to the world economy's ups and downs.

And when an economic crisis hits like the one that has rippled around the world over the past year, middle class professionals are often the first to be squeezed as interest rates soar and international companies trim payrolls.

"Traditionally, the middle class was a family where the father worked and supported the entire family," said Luis Feld, a 39-year-old taxi driver in Buenos Aires, Argentina. "Now the entire family is working, including the mother and the oldest child."

As the global economy struggles, much of the world's population is being redivided into just two classes: a financial elite and a working class.

"In order to stay competitive, companies all over have to slash costs. This affects the whole world," said Antonio Castro, an analyst at Oxford Economic Forecasting in Mexico.

"The middle class is being absorbed into the working class to the point that in some cases it has practically disappeared," he added.

For folks once accustomed to annual vacations or nights on the town, that means simpler dinners at home and not buying a dream house or a washing machine.

"I still go for designer labels, but now I wait for sales," said Grace Wong, 28, a Hong Kong bank manager.

Ivan Choy, a political scientist at Hong Kong's City University, said that attitude illustrates a trend even in places that haven't been hit by hard times."People still have a lot of savings, but they're not willing to spend because of growing unemployment" and increasing instability in global markets, he said.

After suffering years of turmoil under the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, middle class Filipinos who were just beginning to enjoy modest prosperity are being pinched.

Edna Marie Bartolome, a freelance writer in Manila, is now more careful about what she buys, avoiding the shopping mall because "you'll end up spending for something you don't really need."

In hard-hit Indonesia, a middle class that emerged only in the past two decades is rapidly withering as banks and factories go bust.

In South Korea, it's common to see homeless people in suits and ties wandering around public parks and railway stations.

Unemployment is at a 32-year high of 7.6 per cent, with 1.65 million people jobless in a nation of 44 million.

Many of South Korea's new jobless belonged to the middle class, and those who still have jobs have seen their incomes drop sharply.

"It's a mess," said Kim Jung-Hee, a bookstore owner who had to cancel plans to send her daughter to the United States to study English literature. "Our income has dropped nearly 40 per cent."

In Singapore, layoffs have risen to record levels. Many of the newly unemployed are finance professionals: brokers, analysts and researchers.

Real estate agents are losing work amid a depressed property market.

The trend has particular implications for developing nations in Latin America, Asia and Africa where democracy is just beginning to take hold.

In some countries, worsening unemployment and recession could fuel social discontent and instability, political analysts say.

Groups could channel unhappiness into protests challenging government policies.

In extreme cases, frustrations could lead people in some countries to opt for authoritarian regimes.

"Mexico, which is at the threshold of democracy, had a better income distribution when authoritarianism was in full swing in the 1960s and 1970s than it does now," said Lorenzo Meyer, a professor at the prestigious Colegio de Mexico and a visiting scholar at Stanford University. "Average Mexicans could ask themselves why they need to have a democracy."

In South Korea, economic woes are eating away at support for President Kim Dae-Jung. His former approval ratings of 80 per cent have dropped below 50 per cent as more people lose jobs and homes.

The economic crisis has seriously affected political stability in Indonesia. The United Nations predicts that by next year, two-thirds of the country's 140 million people will be living in poverty, pretty much wiping out the nascent middle class.

Exchange Rates

Tuesday, November 03, 1998 — ACCESS 4646868

CURRANCY	JORDAN DINAR	SAUDI RIYAL	U.A.E. DIRHAM	BAHRAIN DINAR	OMAN RIYAL	QATAR RIYAL	KUWAIT DINAR	EGYPT POUND
JORDAN DINAR	1.0000	0.1888	0.1927	1.8779	1.8390	0.1944	2.3479	0.2067
SAUDI RIYAL	5.2976	1.0000	1.0211	9.9483	9.7421	1.0301	12.4385	1.0952
U.A.E DIRHAM	5.1881	0.9793	1.0000	9.7427	9.5408	1.0088	12.1815	1.0728
BAHRAIN DINAR	0.5325	0.1005	0.1026	1.0000	0.9793	0.1035	1.2503	0.1101
OMAN RIYAL	0.5438	0.1026	0.1048	1.0212	1.0000	0.1057	1.2768	0.1124
QATAR RIYAL	5.1429	0.9708	0.9913	9.6578	9.4577	1.0000	12.0753	1.0632
KUWAIT DINAR	0.4259	0.0804	0.0821	0.7998	0.7832	0.0828	1.0000	0.0881
EGYPT POUND	4.8370	0.9131	0.9323	9.0833	8.8951	0.9405	11.3570	1.0000
LEBANON LIRA	21.4831	4.0552	4.1408	40.3427	39.5065	4.1772	50.4411	4.4414
US DOLLAR	1.4124	0.2666	0.2722	2.6524	2.5974	0.2746	3.3163	0.2920
G.BRITAIN STERLIN	0.8517	0.1608	0.1642	1.5995	1.5663	0.1656	1.9998	0.1761
GERMANY MARK	2.3397	0.4417	0.4510	4.3937	4.3026	0.4549	5.4935	0.4837
SWITZERLAND FRA	1.9102	0.3606	0.3682	3.5871	3.5127	0.3714	4.4850	0.3949
FRANCE FRANC	7.8424	1.4804	1.5116	14.7271	14.4218	1.5249	18.4135	1.6213
JAPAN YEN*	1.6369	0.3090	0.3155	3.0738	3.0101	0.3183	3.8433	0.3384
HOLLAND GUILDER	2.6377	0.4979	0.5084	4.9533	4.8508	0.5129	6.1932	0.5453
SWEDEN KRONA	11.0549	2.0868	2.1308	20.7589	20.3296	2.1495	25.9564	2.2855
ITALY LIRA**	23.1391	4.3679	4.4600	43.4526	42.5519	4.4992	54.3294	4.7838
BELGIUM FRANC	48.2514	9.1092	9.3003	90.6106	88.7325	9.3821	113.2918	9.9755
AUSTRALIA DOLLA	2.2686	0.4282	0.4373	4.2602	4.1719	0.4411	5.3265	0.4690
GREEC DRACHMA	3.9629	0.7480	0.7638	7.4418	7.2875	0.7705	9.3046	0.8193
CYPRUS POUND	2.8782	0.5433	0.5548	5.4050	5.2930	0.5597	6.7580	0.5950
AUSTRIA SCHILLING	16.4336	3.1021	3.1675	30.8604	30.2208	3.1954	38.5853	3.3975
CANADA DOLLAR	2.1638	0.4085	0.4171	4.0634	3.9792	0.4207	5.0806	0.4474
EURO	1.1924	0.2251	0.2298	2.2392	2.1928	0.2319	2.7998	0.2465

CURRANCY	US DOLLAR	G.BRITAIN STERLING	GERMANY MARK	SWITZERLAND FRANC	FRANCE FRANC	JAPAN YEN*	HOLLAND GUILDER	ITALY LIRA**
US DOLLAR	1.0000	1.6583	0.6037	0.7394	0.1801	0.8629	0.5355	8.1041
G.BRITAIN STERLIN	0.6030	1.0000	0.3640	0.4459	0.1086	0.5203	0.3229	3.6809
GERMANY MARK	1.6565	2.7470	1.0000	1.2249	0.2983	1.4294	0.8870	10.1114
SWITZERLAND FRA	1.3524	2.2427	0.8164	1.0000	0.2436	1.1670	0.7242	8.2552
FRANCE FRANC	5.5524	9.2075	3.3519	4.1056	1.0000	4.7911	2.9732	33.8923
JAPAN YEN*	115.8900	192.1804	69.9608	85.6921	20.8721	1.0000	62.0562	707.4012
HOLLAND GUILDER	1.8675	3.0969	1.1274	1.3809	0.3363	1.6114	1.0000	11.3994
SWEDEN KRONA	7.8269	12.9793	4.7250	5.7874	1.4096	6.7537	4.1911	47.7780
ITALY LIRA**	16.3825	27.1671	9.8898	12.1136	2.9505	14.1362	8.7724	100.000
BELGIUM FRANC	34.1620	56.6508	20.6230	25.2603	6.1527	29.4780	18.2829	208.5274
AUSTRALIA DOLLA	1.6062	2.6635	0.9696	1.1876	0.2893	1.3858	0.8601	9.8042
GREEC DRACHMA	2.8057	4.6527	1.6938	2.0746	0.5053	2.4210	1.5024	17.1262
CYPRUS POUND	2.0378	3.3793	1.2302	1.5068	0.3670	1.7584	1.0912	12.4389
AUSTRIA SCHILLING	11.6350	19.2943	7.0238	8.6032	2.0955	10.0397	6.2303	71.0209
CANDA DOLLAR	1.5320	2.5405	0.9248	1.1326	0.2759	1.3219	0.8203	9.3514
EURO	0.8442	1.4000	0.5097	0.6243	0.1520	0.7285	0.4521	5.1533

MAJOR CURRENCIES AGAINST JORDAN DINAR

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DEPOSIT INTEREST PRICES — CBJA

CURRANCY	1 M	3 M	6 M	1 YEAR
US DOLLAR	5.2388	5.2195	4.9796	4.7513
G.BRITAIN STERLING	7.3756	7.1750	6.9080	6.5609
FRANCE FRANC	1.0000	1.2563	1.3084	1.4166
GERMANY MARK	3.6000	3.5967	3.5563	3.5000
SWITZERLAND FRANC	3.5098	3.5703	3.5410	3.5039
JAPAN YEN*	0.3522	0.4034	0.4356	0.4652

CENTRAL BANK BULLETIN

CURRANCY	ASK	BID
US DOLLAR	0.7080	0.7100
G.BRITAIN STERLING	1.1742	1.1801
GERMANY MARK	0.4267	0.4288
SWITERLAND FRANC	0.5227	0.5253
FRANCE FRANC	0.1273	0.1279
JAPAN YEN*	0.6128	0.6159
HOLLAND GUILDER	0.3784	0.3803
ITALY LIRA*	0.0431	0.0434
EURO	0.8386	0.8410

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

STOCK MARKET	INDEX	CLOSING	LAST CLOSE	CHANGE
FRANKFURT	DAX	4761.15	4671.12	90.03
HONG KONG	HANG SENG	10170.00	10154.94	15.06
LONDON	FT-SE 100	5625.50	5438.40	87.10
NEW YORK	DJ INDUS.	8706.15	8592.10	114.05
NEW YORK	NYSE COMPOSITE	551.24	543.35	7.89
NEW YORK	AMEX COMPOSITE	656.62	645.41	11.21
NEW YORK	S+P 500	1111.60	1098.67	12.93
TOKYO	NIKKEI-225	13952.75	13564.51	388.24
PARIS	CAC 40	3569.60	3522.39	47.21
FRANKFURT	COMMERZBANK	4440.70	4328.20	112.50

PRECIOUS METALS

METAL	ASK	BID
GOLD	289.75	290.25
SILVER	4.98	5.01
PLATINUM	335.50	337.50

Iran will keep fixed riyal rates

TEHRAN (R) — Iran's central bank said it would keep official fixed exchange rates on the riyal at least until March 2000, state television has reported.

The central bank's comments came after a senior bank official said the rates had outlived their purpose.

"The central bank announced that the policy of fixing exchange rates...would continue until the end of the year 1378 (March 20, 2000)," Iranian state television reported.

The bank said exchange policies after that date, the end of Iran's second five-year plan, would have to be set within the third plan.

It said remarks by Central Bank Deputy Governor Mohammad Jafar Mojarrad calling for dropping the fixed rates referred to the third development plan, which is still being drawn up.

Mojarrad said in remarks published last week that dropping fixed rates would make the economy more resilient to shocks such as a slump in oil prices.

In 1995, Iran banned free market currency dealings, imposing an official exchange rate of 3,000 riyals for each dollar to stop a free-fall of the currency after the United States announced sanctions against the Islamic republic. The riyal had fallen as low as 7,000 to the dollar at the time.

The move led to relative stability in the riyal after the government arrested scores of street dealers. But the rules caused a sharp fall in non-oil exports as traders were reluctant to exchange their hard currency income at the official rate.

Iran's system of official exchange rates, which includes a rate of 1,750 riyals to the dollar for some state budget accounts, has often been criticised by businessmen.

But the issue is politically sensitive as state controls are seen as defending the national currency against foreign pressures on the Islamic republic.

Critics of the fixed rates say they lead to corrupt dealings in which dollars obtained from the state end up being sold at a big profit on the illegal but active black market.

But supporters say floating the riyal would feed inflation by making large state food imports, funded by the government at the official riyal rate, more expensive.

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World markets must remain free to avoid further crisis — Aznar

BIRMINGHAM, England (AFP) — The major economies must remain unfettered by over-regulation if deeper global economic problems are to be avoided, Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar said Monday.

Aznar, addressing the Confederation of British Industry's annual meeting in Birmingham, England, said that "now is not the time to revert to generalised capital controls, which would make us all poorer."

"Neither is it the time for would-be 'world government,' which would apply bureaucratic rationality to investment placing," he said.

Aznar said that the current crisis in Asia and other emerging markets "was not caused by globalisation or the free market. Indeed the opposite is true: What went wrong in Asia and in the rest of the world was due to the lack of transparency and lack of responsibility."

Aznar said that reforms of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other international financial bodies were necessary, but had to be backed by "sufficient resources to be able to withstand turbulence and crisis."

Aznar's speech came days after leaders of the Group of Seven (G-7) industrial powers pledged to tighten regulation of international capital markets and to use a new IMF rescue line to attack the turmoil sweeping the world economy.

In a joint statement issued in all G-7 capitals, the heads of government called for a new framework for the next century to stabilise the increasingly interlinked economies of the world.

China eyes solid '98 trade surplus

BEIJING (R) — China is on track to post a solid trade surplus this year despite Asia's financial crisis, state media and trade experts have said.

"Trade surplus is expected to top $40 billion this year," said an economist of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation.

China recorded a trade surplus of $40.3 billion last year.

China's trade surplus rose 15 per cent year-on-year to $35.3 billion in the first nine months of this year despite a slowdown in exports, customs figures show.

Analysts said weak imports due to a slowing in growth partly helped China achieve the larger-than-expected surplus.

Exports rose a year-on-year 3.9 per cent from January to September, compared with an annual surge of 20.9 per cent in 1997.

China's exports in September alone dipped a year-on-year 6.7 per cent, the biggest monthly drop this year.

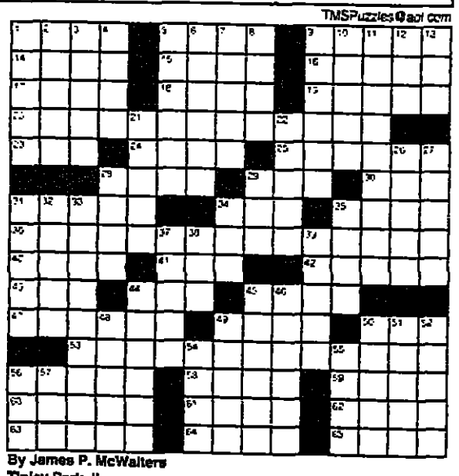
Exports are likely to pick up slightly in the remaining months of this year, said the ministry economist, who declined to be identified.

"The surplus pattern in foreign trade is unlikely to reverse in the first half of next year," the China News Service said, quoting an unnamed trade expert.

THE Daily Crossword

Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



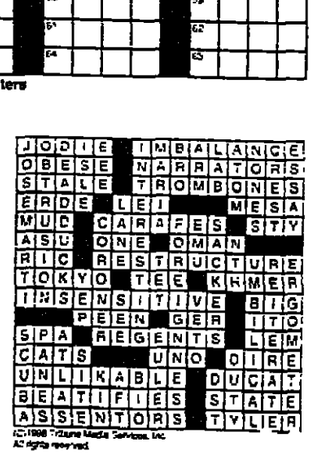
ACROSS

1 "My Friend __"
5 Mineral springs
9 Golden-touch king
14 Genuine
15 Saga
16 Guido
17 Summit
18 Gardner of mysteries
19 Peachy
20 Noiseless
23 Wrath
24 Portent
25 Combines
28 Bulk
29 Turn right
30 This moment
31 Cornered in branches
34 Scale notes
35 Course of "Gilligan's Island"
36 Huge
40 Unknown auth.
41 Gangster's gun
42 Stirs to anger
43 DNA connection
44 Auction action
46 English boys' school
47 After-dinner party
49 Normandy town
50 Research rm.
53 Foolish
56 Part of a pansy
58 Author Kingsley
59 Human parasites
60 The in crowd
61 Lacoste or Levesque
62 Ending for tear or gum
63 Printers' measures
64 Tired feet
66 Adjusts

DOWN

1 Hussein, for one
2 Come up, again
3 Ike's wife
4 On the sheltered side
5 Cooks in vapors
6 Diagrams a sentence
7 Edgar __ Poe
8 Appear
9 Sofa section
10 Occupied
11 Occurring every ten years
12 Northern sea bird
13 007, e.g.
21 Warty amphibians
22 Fatter than fat
26 "Diving Poems" poet
27 Swings of the bat
28 Inland
29 Guy's date
31 Ski-slope devices
32 Old detergent brand
33 Self-centered
34 Showed the way
35 Skinny
37 Shakespearean sprite
39 Wordless agreement
39 Antler tip
44 Ball lasses
45 Palliating
46 Pokes fun
48 Lasso
49 Walk-on part
50 French river
51 Flamboyant tie
52 Toots
54 Scotland __
55 GM make
56 Enthusiasm
57 Samuel's teacher

By James P. McWalters
Tinley Park, IL



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Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



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By Glasbergen



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JUMBLE®

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion

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GERAW

TOPITE

YONDOB

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon

Answer here: A "_____" _____ (Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: VIRUS NEEDY GAMBLE NEGATE
Answer: The boss' compliment left the steel worker doing this — BEAMING

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Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Truckers present demands to Ministry of Transport

THE ASSOCIATION of Jordanian public truck owners wants higher trucking fares, lower income tax and a reduction of the obligatory third party insurance imposed on trucks as well as the JD8 penalty which is paid by each truck upon returning to the country. No details were given about the penalty but the association said the same fees are not charged on other non-Jordanian trucks.

The demands were presented during a meeting that the administrative board of the association held with the minister of transport in the presence of proprietors of transport offices and owners of refrigerated trucks. During the meeting, other issues were discussed including establishing an office of departure to prevent mishandling of loading and unloading by concerned companies. The board also asked the authorities to extend the validity of HIV certificates required by Iraq from three months to six months.

The association asked the Ministry of Transport to request the Department of Customs not to allow Turkish trucks loaded from Saudi Arabia to unload any goods in Jordan but only to pass in transit as stipulated in international and Arab transit regulations. The truckers also requested contacting the Saudi ambassador in Amman to have him authorise giving Jordanian trucks transit visas to Yemen.

As to transport arrangement with Syria, the association board members told the minister that some Syrian cars load goods in Jordan destined to other countries. They stressed that such a situation is legally not permissible as Syrian cars enter Jordan independently and not in convoys as is the case with Jordanian trucks when they enter Syria.

"Syrian trucks enjoy free movement and stay in Jordan whereas Jordanian trucks are forced to stay at Al Athra customs centre, some 30 kilometres from Damascus and the driver is prohibited to stay at any of the hotels in the Syrian capital," the members of the association board said. They discussed with the minister the subject of penalties in Egypt where a fine of the 100 Egyptian pounds must be paid for each day of delay. The association asked that the stay in Egypt be extended to seven days.

Finally, the association members said it is necessary to fix the charges of the Ministry of Transport due to the large number of trucks in the Kingdom and the varying charges among them. Unemployment among drivers, traffic violations and confiscating driving licences (Al Arab Al Yawm).

IDB, DDB sign $10m credit deal

AN AGREEMENT has been concluded regarding the Danish credit mixed programme offered by the Government of Denmark to credit-worthy developing countries. This is a long-term low interest loan aimed at financing development projects executed by Danish exporters. Deliveries under this programme should be of at least 50 per cent Danish origin in the supply contract. Deliveries from third countries can be equivalent of maximum of 30 per cent while deliveries from local sources may make up for the remaining part of the deliveries.

The agreement is a result of the Cooperation Opportunities Conference between Jordan and Denmark in which the Industrial Development Bank (IDB) took part.

The IDB and the Den Dansk e Bank (DDB) / Denmark were chosen as the Jordanian and Danish partners to steer this programme.

Within this arrangement, the IDB shall extend easy term loans ranging from $0.5 million to $2.4 million to Jordanian investors to purchase capital goods and services from Danish suppliers.

The agreement was signed by IDB's Chairman Sa'ed Tell and General Manager Rajub Al Sa'ad, and DDB's vice presidents Nielsen and Nordstorm.

Qatar's loan woes herald higher prices for Mideast borrowers

LONDON (R) — The woes of the Qatari loan market, which has ground to a halt with deals totalling $1.6 billion in the pipeline, herald a major price increase for Middle Eastern borrowers, Reuters subsidiary Loan Pricing Corporation (LPC) has reported.

LPC reporter Tessa Walsh, quoting banking sources, said the Middle East emerged relatively unscathed from the Asian turmoil but the Russian crisis is now taking its toll and has spread emerging market contagion to the region.

"It's very uncertain but pricing is likely to double for Middle Eastern borrowers in line with global trends," said one banker.

LPC said Qatar's financing programme has been disrupted by a dispute over an $850 million hybrid project/corporate financing for National Oil Distribution Company of Qatar (NODCO), which is being arranged and underwritten by Barclays Capital Qatar is rated BBB by S&P.

The $450 million project financing for Qatar Vinyl Corp (QVC) arranged and underwritten by CSFB, Paribas and Apicorp, and a proposed $300 million loan for the State of Qatar are also stalled pending a resolution of the NODCO situation.

Barclays and the arrangers of QVC are now locked in to funding the deals at pre-crisis pricing through their underwriting commitments which they cannot selldown further as the market is now demanding a large pricing hike to compensate for increased risk.

The NODCO loan, which has pre-completion guarantees from the State of Qatar and Qatar General Petroleum Corp, was launched by Barclays prior to the intensification of the Russian crisis.

The deal, which is priced between 55 and 65 bps over LIBOR, was viewed as aggressive before the downturn, owing to its unusually long tenor, and failed to attract sufficient underwriting support.

The lack of response from the market coupled with the deteriorating global economic situation prompted Barclays to attempt to invoke the material adverse change clause which would give the arrangers flexibility to revise the loan in the light of changed market conditions, however this was strongly resisted by the Qatari government.

Although an increase in pricing of 25 bps was discussed, Qatar is resistant to any public pricing revision, according to bankers. Barclays' only option is to reduce the size of the loan, and the problematic tenor, according to sources.

The project's contractor, Germany's Lurgi is also likely to play a more active role to aid placement of a reduced deal among its German relationship banks, according to bankers.

The $430 million project financing for QVC is also suffering — the arrangers are committed to providing funds by November 30, however the sub-underwriting phase has been suspended pending resolution of the NODCO situation.

Refinery prepares to issue tender for importing gas

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company (JPRC) said Tuesday that it will soon announce a tender for the importation of 40,000 tonnes of gas in order to meet the Kingdom's needs in the winter season.

JPRC General Manager Abdul Wahab Zoubi said the refinery's daily gas production is about 480 tonnes and this amount is almost enough for the country's daily needs in normal circumstances but not in the winter season when demand rises to 1,400 tonnes a day.

Zoubi said the cost of storing gas is very high, almost JD1,000 for every tonne compared to JD60 for the storage of one tonne of other oil products. He added that the high cost has prevented the company from building storage facilities for gas to meet the Kingdom's needs in winter.

In addition, said Zoubi, the company is facing the problem of the ever growing demand for gas cylinders at a time when the company does not have the capacity to produce sufficient cylinders .

He estimated the number of cylinders in circulation at 2.5 million each of 12.5 kilogramme capacity and at 1,028 cylinders of 50 kilogramme capacity .

He concluded that the company is now working towards boosting its cylinder production capacity to produce 150,000 cylinders a year noting that in 1998 the company imported 200,000 new cylinders but it has scrapped 2,328 cylinders found unfit for use.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) The works is available if you're willing to do it. It'll take a lot of energy, but that's OK. You've got plenty. This opportunity could make financial security possible. The price is your full enthusiasm as well as your full belief in yourself. You want to be successful? Well, you can. Let the others know you'll do what it takes.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You've got a tough choice to make today. You need to do what's best for your home, and for the plans you've made there. Money is a consideration too, of course, but not as important as your quality of living. In other words, you have permission to spend a little more so you can get something really nice.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You have a way of weaving in and around the status quo and shaking things up a bit. Your ideas are a little radical and a little daring, but basically you're after the same objective as everybody else. Make sure they listen to what you say and they'll make sure you get what you need. It's a win-win situation.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) The holiday season is approaching, but somebody you know may have to go off in another direction once the family parties get started. You know who this is. Get together this weekend before the other festivities set in. Start with a call today, just to say hello and re-establish a connection.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You could get the funding you need through the help of an older person. The problem is getting it routed into your own pocket, so you can spend it on something you already said you'd buy. It's a little nerve-wracking, but don't worry. You've done favours for this person in the past, and you can ask for this favour now.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Don't worry about a move you're planning. Your common sense is excellent right now, and you also have a good scan on what's coming up. You'll not only increase your own security, but you'll make your loved ones safer, too. You're making things happen, and you're doing it so that you'll be more secure. Keep up the good work.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Looks like a friend is under a bit of pressure, running into obstacles every time he or she turns around. You can help in this situation, if only by providing a shoulder to cry on. You can see everything a little more objectively, since you're not under anywhere near the same amount of pressure. Make yourself available for a private consultation.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) The person you find most irritating today is also your most valuable coach. Try not to overpower one who is attempting to steer you in the right direction. Otherwise, you could get in trouble. Fortunately, your friends will tip you off before that happens, if you're wise enough to listen.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Your thoughts are on the far horizons, but your body is stuck here, doing some job you wish you could delegate. That's OK. You can actually make this voyage happen. Where would you like to go? Tahiti in the spring? Why not? Get started planning now. This is an excellent day to make decisions.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) If you concentrate on a goal you want to accomplish, the petty squabbles today won't be distracting. Counsel your sweetheart to do the same. Someone who's very close to you could get embroiled in a controversy. If you can do something about it by getting involved, go ahead. If it's just a continuation of an old argument, don't bother.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You're going to get farther working with a partner today than you would on your own. You can figure out a way to convince your opponents that your idea has merit. That's where the partnership idea comes in. So, don't be the Lone Ranger. Get somebody else on your side. You need the reinforcements.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You want to be going places, doing things, having adventures, especially if you're in love. Romance is really beckoning right now, and it's hard to keep your mind on anything else. Well, there's good news. This weekend is going to be magnificent for a romantic excursion. Start planning one now, even if you can't go quite yet.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

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	PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
S	355.500	170.000	ARAB BANK	16.9	.97	9	410	84835	207.00	206.50	.50-
	1.920	1.500	JOR.NATIONAL BK.	13.6	4.19	33	13019	21625	1.59	1.67	.08+
S	3.200	1.000	BANK OF JORDAN	E	0.00	2	3100	3317	1.07	1.07	-
	1.300	.850	MID.EAST INV.BK.	66.3	0.00	5	3750	3778	.96	1.01	.05+
S	2.660	1.450	INDUSTRIAL DEV.BK.	10.2	7.15	8	2250	3266	1.45	1.45	-
S	6.510	2.610	THE HOUSING BK.	18.0	3.52	59	271350	788993	2.86	2.84	.02-
S	3.390	1.700	JOR.KUWAIT BANK	1.1	0.00	1	50	88	1.85	1.76	.09-
	.790	.530	JOR.GULF BANK	g	0.00	20	29350	19078	.65	.65	-
S	4.190	1.900	ARAB JOR.INV.BK.	42.7	2.38	6	10000	21000	2.16	2.10	.06-
S	3.910	1.540	JOR.ISLAMIC BANK	15.9	0.00	18	4800	7508	1.57	1.56	.01-
	1.200	.900	UNION BK.SAV.INV.	P	0.00	1	100	90	.92	.90	.02-
	.850	.590	PHILADEL.INV.BK.	P	0.00	36	118200	72574	.62	.61	.01-
	BANK SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 273.09 %CHG: -0.21			198	456379	1026151			
S	2.240	1.410	JOR.ELECTRIC PWR.	9.4	5.69	13	6883	9901	1.43	1.45	.02+
+	2.500	1.320	SHIPPING LINES	44.2	6.40	1	500	625	1.32	1.25	.07-
	1.200	.620	NATL. PORTFOLIO	29.9	0.00	7	5250	3938	.75	.75	-
S	4.600	1.870	ARAB INTL.INV.EDUC.	9.4	2.12	4	2800	5292	1.89	1.89	-
	.990	.860	ZARKA EDUCATION	19.8	0.00	1	100	86	.86	.86	-
	1.790	1.060	UNIFIED CO.	4.9	9.91	11	3900	4329	1.09	1.11	.02+
	SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 103.75 %CHG: +0.01			37	19433	24170			
	4.110	1.050	JOR.PHOSPHATE MINES	12.6	0.00	93	254289	304506	1.19	1.19	-
	6.500	3.300	ARAB POTASH CO.	17.0	5.80	1	150	518	3.45	3.45	-
	11.250	10.050	JOR. PETROL.REFINARY	9.9	8.73	23	2106	21467	10.18	10.18	-
	5.950	4.450	JORDAN TANNING	8.5	7.55	2	350	1850	5.30	5.30	-
	1.610	1.060	INDUSTRIAL COMM.AGR.	64.4	0.00	8	1904	2074	1.08	1.09	.01+
	7.350	5.500	JOR.WORSTED MILLS	7.4	3.54	1	5000	28250	5.65	5.65	-
S	5.740	2.400	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	7.1	2.90	13	5038	13208	2.62	2.59	.03-
S	4.750	1.000	JOR.CERAMIC IND.	4.5	9.71	1	50	52	1.00	1.03	.03+
	1.440	1.040	JOR.PIPES MANFCT.	9.0	9.17	5	1524	1660	1.09	1.09	-
	6.350	4.700	DAR ALDAWA DV.INV.	6.1	6.86	1	1000	5100	5.05	5.10	.05+
	2.980	1.700	ARAB ALUM.IND.	12.9	14.29	1	150	263	1.77	1.75	.02-
	.530	.350	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	12.8	0.00	4	2200	836	.38	.38	-
	.730	.370	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	g	0.00	3	3850	1810	.47	.47	-
	.610	.330	NATIONAL INDS.	g	0.00	1	150	59	.37	.39	.02+
	.530	.280	INTERMED.PETRO.CHEM.	g	0.00	4	2500	750	.30	.30	-
	.620	.290	JOR. ROCKWOOL INDS.	g	0.00	3	1250	426	.36	.35	.01-
S	1.980	.630	NATL.CABLE WIRE.MFAC	30.5	0.00	10	2950	1918	.66	.65	.01-
	1.470	1.150	ARAB PHARM.CHEM.	13.6	4.88	6	1700	2092	1.23	1.23	-
S	1.240	.530	UNIV. MODN.INDS.	9.7	9.84	5	2200	1350	.61	.61	-
	.850	.400	JOR.INDS.RESOURCES	g	0.00	13	8650	3806	.44	.44	-
	1.560	1.160	NATL. CHLORINE	8.6	8.20	3	7200	8786	1.22	1.22	-
	1.080	.600	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	8.7	16.13	8	40568	25155	.62	.62	-
	1.560	1.150	EL -ZAY READY WEAR	41.2	0.00	1	50	59	1.17	1.17	-
S	1.310	.910	INTL. TOBACCO	7.7	5.30	24	16191	17991	1.11	1.10	.01-
	.890	.660	JORDAN STEEL	9.4	8.33	13	7050	5972	.84	.84	-
	.730	.580	NAT.ALUMINIUM.	33.2	0.00	10	7200	4864	.68	.67	.01-
	.670	.520	MID.EAST COMPLEX	9.6	0.00	1	400	212	.53	.53	-
	INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 71.82 %CHG: -0.04			258	375670	455029			
	GRAND TOTAL		INDEX: 163.46 %CHG: -0.16			493	851482	1505350			

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N	1.230	1.000	ISLAMIC INSURANCE CO	P	0.00	1	50	60	1.16	1.20	.04+
	.780	.500	UNION INV.	g	0.00	3	5022	2761	.55	.55	-
	.740	.560	AL-DAWLIYAH	33.0	0.00	1	1500	870	.58	.58	-
N	2.220	.950	CENTURY INV. GROUP	g	0.00	5	25750	24463	.95	.95	-
	.200	.090	JOR.INDS.MATCH-JEMCO	g	0.00	4	7800	1092	.14	.14	-
	.600	.270	ARAB FOOD & MED.	g	0.00	2	5000	1500	.29	.30	.01+
	.580	.220	NATL.MULT.ENG.NAMICO	g	0.00	22	117000	28080	.23	.24	.01+
	.690	.470	MIDEAST PHARM. 90%	E	0.00	9	12000	4560	.47	.48	.01+
T	2.160	1.190	UNION TOBACCO	12.5	6.38	2	200	448	2.28	2.24	.04-
	.320	.190	INDS. ENG.	g	0.00	26	49900	10978	.21	.22	.01+
	.660	.300	INDS. CERAMIC	8.4	0.00	3	1750	560	.30	.32	.02+
N	.950	.500	ADVANCED PHARMA.IND.	g	0.00	1	250	135	.54	.54	-
	.500	.260	PEARL SAN. P. CONV.	E	0.00	3	4145	1160	.27	.28	.01+
N	.950	.310	OPTICALS HEARING CO.	P	0.00	1	100	33	.32	.33	.01+
N	1.310	.610	NUTRIDAR	P	0.00	5	1750	1178	.66	.68	.02+
N	1.000	.690	AL-EKBAL PRINTING CO	11.3	10.24	8	3800	2797	.71	.74	.03+
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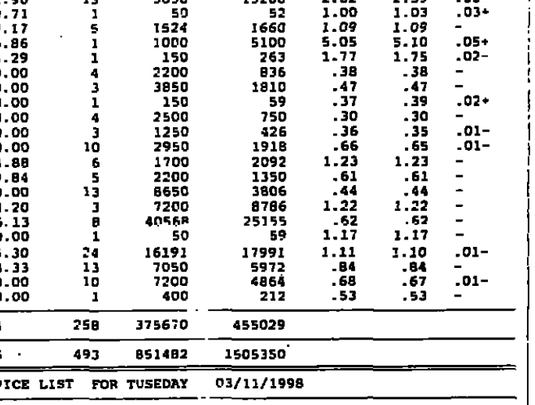
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Kiwi mares upstage world's leading stable in Melbourne

MELBOURNE (AFP) — Two New Zealand mares upstaged the world's biggest stable when Jezabeel fought back to shade Champagne to win the Melbourne Cup at Flemington here Tuesday.

Jezabeel, backed in from 8-1 to start 6-1 favourite, came again after being headed by Champagne (7-1) inside the final furlong (200m) to win Australia's greatest horse race by a neck. Persian Punch, a 12-1 chance and the best of the seven overseas horses, a further half length away third.

The Cup was contested against bitterness over unqualified overseas horses getting a start ahead of the qualified local stayers.

English stayer Yorkshire, trained by Paul Cole, was placed in the 24-strong field for the AS2.8 million ($1.68 million) race at the discretion of the Victoria Racing Club.

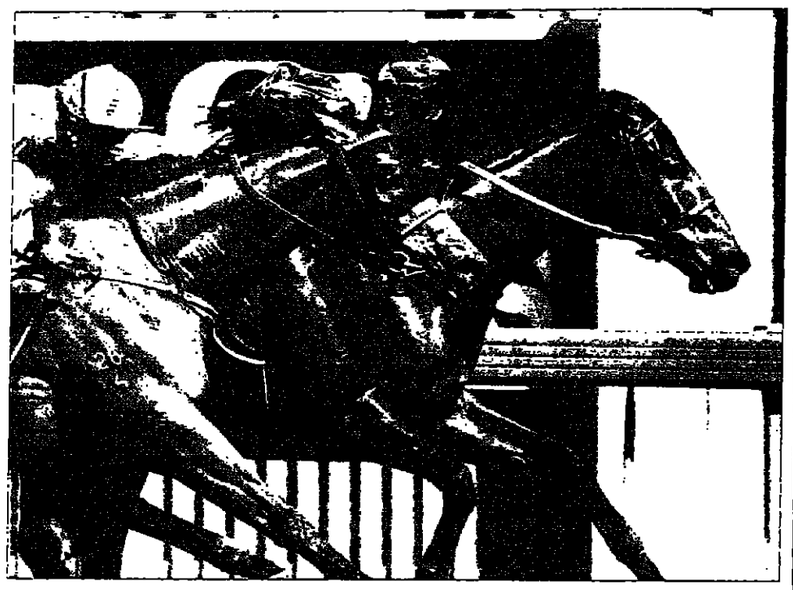
Faithful Son, the early pre-post favourite who eased from 5-1 to 13-2, was the first runner in the Melbourne Cup from Sheikh Mohammad Ben Rashid Al Maktoum's Goldophin stable.

No expense was spared to prepare Faithful Son, even to the extent of flying the stable's personal farrier Jim Bayes in a private jet last weekend to inspect his hooves.

But fears expressed by jockey Frankie Dettori that he might not stay the 3,200 metres were borne out as Faithful Son faded to seventh after being in the firing line in the home straight.

Dettori said: "I had a lovely run round but when I let him down he ran out of petrol. The ground was probably a bit too fast for us."

Tuesday's performance puts in doubt Faithful Son's plans for the Japan Cup later this month.



New Zealand horse 'Jezabeel' (R) and its jockey Chris Munce hit the finish line ahead of 'Champagne' to win the world's richest handicap race, the Melbourne Cup, Tuesday. 'Jezabeel' won the $1.68 million race ahead of local horse 'Champagne' and English stayer 'Persian Punch' (AFP photo)

It was a sweet victory for the connections of six-year-old Zabeel mare Jezabeel, who protested unsuccessfully after meeting severe interference when a two-length sixth in the Caulfield Cup two weeks ago won by Lady Anne Herries' Taufan's Melody.

Triumphant Melbourne Cup trainer Brian Jenkins welcomed the foreign invasion, but gave the visitors a backhanded compliment.

"But they'll have to send their best ones the next time, not their second stringers," said Jenkins Tuesday.

"I'm shaking like a leaf. It was a fantastic performance. My horse just does not give up. She never slows down."

Winning Australian jockey Chris Munce said: "It was an unbelievable feeling to win. I thought when Champagne went past it was going to win the race but my horse has got plenty of heart.

"I had to use her speed out of the barrier to get a position, but it was the nicest ride. She dropped the bit like a good stayer does and I followed Aerosmith and waited for the breaks.

"When Champagne went past us I thought she was going to beat us because she came so quick but Jezabeel kept giving more."

The overseas contingent was headed by Persian Punch, a six year old gelding from the English stable of David Elsworth.

Persian Punch, which had a setback while in quarantine in England, was up with the leaders at the home turn about 400m from the post, but could not sustain its finish in the face of the lighter-weighted Jezabeel and Champagne.

Taufan's Melody, which won the leadup Caulfield Cup at the odds of 66-1 but started at 20-1 Tuesday, ran on to finish fourth, ahead of the 33-1 English chance Yorkshire.

Taufan's Melody jockey Paddy Payne said: "He ran a terrific race but there was so much pressure from the start and that didn't suit him."

Yorkshire jockey Dan Nikolic said: "He travelled well to the winning post the first time but he overraced for 400 metres from there to the 1800 metres. I followed the winner from the 1600 metres but he choked up when I went for him in the straight."

The Melbourne Cup ended tragically for Singapore contender Three Crowns (125-1), which led to about the 1,000m mark, only to fail to finish with fetlock trouble.

"He snapped a leg and I got off him as soon as I could," jockey Simon Price said.

Rangers wait on Guivarc'h

GLASGOW (AFP) — Unsettled Newcastle striker Stephane Guivarc'h is expected to decide by Wednesday whether he will join Scottish giants Glasgow Rangers.

Rangers have reopened talks with the French star's advisers after failing with two earlier approaches when Guivarc'h said he wanted to stay in the English Premiership or return to the continent.

But a £3 million ($4.8-million) bid and a reported salary of more than £20,000 a week could now tempt the player north of the border after a lack of interest from other clubs.

Rangers chairman David Murray said: "It is up to the player and we expect to hear from him but this is the last time we will go down this road."

Guivarc'h notched 47 goals in 57 games with Auxerre to twice finish leading scorer in France but failed to score in the World Cup finals this summer.

European dream at risk for Juventus

TURIN (AFP) — Juventus' dreams of making a fourth straight European Champions League final could be lying in tatters here on Wednesday night after they face Athletic Bilbao.

Only a victory over the Basques will be good enough for Marcello Lippi's men if they are to stand any real chance of reaching the quarter-finals from Group B after three straight draws.

Juventus are languishing down in third place behind Galatasaray (4pts) and Rosenborg (5pts), and defeat or even a draw could be fatal.

Not only will they have little chance of finishing top, but those draws will also give them scant chance of qualifying as one of the top two runners-up among the six groups.

Currently, only four of the 24 teams in this season's Champions League have fewer points on the board than Juventus.

Lippi admitted: "This match is fundamental for us."

The good news for Lippi is the champions' return to the top of the Serie A and the continuing form of striker Filippo Inzaghi, who scored both goals against Sampdoria here on Sunday.

"We mustn't stop now that things have started to go so well for us," said Inzaghi, who has bagged five of the seven Juventus goals scored at the Delle Alpi this season in the Serie A and Champions League.

"We'll need the same determination we showed when we sorted out Inter Milan. That match was the turning point in our season, or at least we hope so. Now we'll have to be that fired-up again to beat Athletic Bilbao."

Inzaghi defended Juventus' record in Europe this season, saying: "The only false move we've really made so far was at home to Galatasaray — in Trondheim and Bilbao we got two good draws.

"And in Spain, you could see that same old authority coming out in the second half. But even that performance won't be enough on Wednesday — this match will be like a final: both of us are obliged to win.

"I just hope we recover in time physically: Athletic are full of fight and they never give up. We'll need to be ready for them."

Inzaghi will be partnering Alessandro Del Piero up front, supported by French World Cup star Zinedine Zidane.

The bad news for Lippi is that Zidane's skipper at France 98, Didier Deschamps, has twisted his ankle and will be out for three weeks — probably until their game in Istanbul against Galatasaray –on November 25.

But if Juventus are in difficulty, the situation is little short of desperate for Bilbao. They are bottom of the table and last month's goalless draw with the Italian club earned them only their second point in the competition.

Their uninspiring season in Spain continued with a last-minute draw at home to Espanyol on Saturday that left Luis Fernandez's men mid-table.

Basque pride means that Athletic will not give up without a fight, but Lippi's men may not get a better chance to collect three points.



Former World No. 1 Steffi Graf of Germany hammers a forehand to Romania's Ruxandra Dragomir whom she beat 6-3, 6-3 in the $450,000 WTA indoor tournament in Leipzig Tuesday — her first singles match following a two-month injury lay-off. Graf, who has won 21 Grand Slam singles titles, is now ranked 22nd in the world (AFP photo)

French coach has high praise for Ginola

LONDON (AFP) — France coach Roger Lemerre has heaped praise on Tottenham winger David Ginola fuelling speculation that the flamboyant Frenchman could make a dramatic international comeback.

Ginola's talents were repeatedly overlooked by former French boss Aime Jacquet, but in an interview with the London Evening Standard, Lemerre has hinted that the 31-year-old could still play for France.

Lemerre, who succeeded Jacquet after France's World Cup triumph, told the paper: "I brought David into the French set-up first of all and he was tremendous.

"I went to see him in every match he played at Paris St. Germain and it was always a spectacle because Ginola is a creative player. "He's cultivated a style that's skill for skill's sake and it is one of the ingredients of success."

"But you can't ask him to do what he is not there to do. It is a question of having players who can fit into your system.

"Ginola is a wonderful creator of opportunities and he has incredible imagination. Either you take him for what he is or you don't take him at all. If you take him as he is you've got a great artist."

Dallas downs listless Eagles

PHILADELPHIA (AFP) — Troy Aikman returned from a five-game absence to throw two touchdown passes and the Dallas Cowboys looked like the Super Bowl champions from earlier this decade Sunday, blanking the Philadelphia Eagles 34-0.

All the stars shined for Dallas in front of a national TV audience and a silent crowd at Veterans Stadium against the listless Eagles, who have been shut out twice in one season for the first time since 1949.

Having endured a 38-0 loss to Seattle in its season opener, Philadelphia became the first team in National Football League history to be blanked by 30 or more points at home twice in one season.

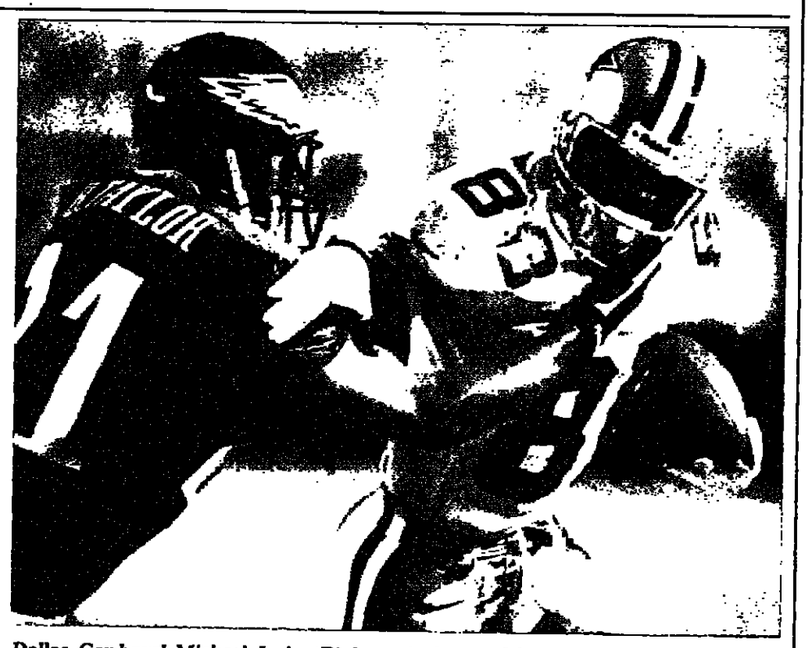
Deion Sanders had a 69-yard punt return for a touchdown. Emmitt Smith rushed for 101 yards and a score and Michael Irvin helped spark the rout with a 10-yard TD catch as Dallas (5-3) remained alone on top of the NFC East. The Cowboys shut out the Eagles for the first time in 78 all-time meetings.

Aikman completed 14-of-26 passes for 171 yards in his first game since September 13, when he broke his left collarbone in a loss to Denver. Without Aikman, the Cowboys posted a 3-2 record with Jason Garrett at the helm.

On Monday night at Dallas last season, the Eagles botched the hold on a potential game-winning 21-yard field goal as time expired. This time, Philadelphia did not even have the chance to kick a field goal.

Philadelphia's deepest penetration into Dallas territory was to the 20-yard line early in the second quarter, but Bobby Hoying was picked off by safety Darren Woodson. After that, the Eagles (1-7) never moved past the Dallas 32.

Hoying was an abysmal 13-of-39 for 124 yards and two interceptions in relief of Rodney Peete, who left in the first quarter with a lacerated right index finger.



Dallas Cowboys' Michael Irvin (R) is pushed out of bounds by the Philadelphia Eagles Bobby Taylor after an eight-yard gain in the first quarter of NFL action in Philadelphia (Reuters photo)

Sainz under pressure in Rally Australia

PERTH (AFP) — Past failures haunt Spanish ace Carlos Sainz going into his bogey event Rally Australia Thursday, attempting to stave off late challenges from Tommi Makinen and Colin McRae for the world championship.

With just the Australian and RAC rallies left in the season, Sainz has a slender two point lead over Makinen desperate to retain his world crown and give Finland the double to go with Mika Hakkinen's Formula One title.

Scotland's McRae, is a further six points back and like Makinen he enjoys much more success in Australia than Sainz.

Sainz, world champion in 1990 and 1992, had his best Australian result in 1990 when he was second. Last year a stone found its way into the engine of his car when he was leading with a day to go, forcing him out and halting his championship run.

He said Tuesday he needed a change of luck in Australia.

"I hope things change for the better," he said. "We have very strong ambitions to win here and we will try our best."

Makinen, world champion for the past two years, won the Rally Australia two years ago and McRae, world champion three years ago, won in Australia last year.

The Finn is also on a roll having won the past two rounds of this year's championship.

"I feel very confident because Australia has always been one of my favourite rallies, and I should have a good chance to do whatever is needed," he said.

He said his team had made minor modifications to his Mitsubishi Lancer to make it faster, especially on the gravel surfaces.

Drivers must negotiate many kilometres of gravel in the forest sections of Rally Australia.

"I believe I now hold the whip hand and that Carlos, though he leads at present, is under a lot of pressure.

"This is because he has never won this race or the RAC Rally in Britain, which is the final event on the rally calendar."

McRae knows he must win here to keep his world title hopes flickering.

"The gap between winning and finishing third in a race is now so close you have to put in 100 per cent right from the start," he said.

"This event, and then the RAC Rally, will be the toughest rallies of my career."

Leading drivers before Rally Australia:

Carlos Sainz (Spain) 50 points; Tommi Makinen (Finland) 48; Colin McRae (Great Britain) 42; Juha Kankkunen (Finland) 31; Didier Auriol (France) 30; Richard Burns (Great Britain) 23.

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CINEMA TEL: [illegible]
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Isabelle Adjani .. in Alexandre Duma's
QUEEN MARGOT
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 9:00

CINEMA TEL: [illegible]
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Comedian Mohammad Huneidi .. in
SAEEDI AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

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London-Cape Town Rally participants reach Aqaba

By Alia Shukri Hamzeh

AMMAN — Eighty two classic and modern cars are touring the Kingdom en route to Egypt as part of the London to Cape Town Classic reliability and 4x4 adventure drive.

Thirty-three classic, and 49 modern 4x4 vehicles travelled down to the Channel Tunnel to start 22,000 kilometre rally which kicked off on Oct. 24 from the Canary Wharf Tower in London on the "Drive of a Lifetime" to Cape Town scheduled to end Dec. 4.

The cars entered the Kingdom from Syria through Jaber crossing point on Monday, and passed through the ancient city of Jerash.

The participants had a stopover at the Dead Sea and a night stop in Petra Tuesday. Before heading off for a regularity section at Mount Nebo, the cars entered a special test (gymkhana) at the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan's school track allowing the crews to demonstrate their vehicle's test skills, handling and performance.

This morning the cars will head off to the city of Aqaba passing through Wadi Rum, and are scheduled to leave for Sharm Al Sheikh in Egypt on Thursday.

RACJ director Hassan Alaeddin described the event as a good opportunity for other countries to know more about Jordan adding that such an event would help boost tourism to the country.

"People also get to see many classic and beautiful cars," he added.

Participants in the rally included 116 from Britain, 28 from Holland, 15 Americans, four from Cyprus, Portugal, South Africa, 3 Australians and two each from Malta, Belgium, Austria, Denmark, and Ireland, one from Spain, the Czech Republic, Zimbabwe, and India.

Classic cars manufactured between 1924 and 1963 included a Jaguar, an MG, Allard, Bentley, Mercedes, Porsche, Volvo-Amazon, Mustang-Ford, BMW 2002, Triumph, Austin, Port Cortina, Peugeot 404.

The 4x4 vehicles were mostly Land Rovers and Toyotas, along with a couple of Range Rovers.

On the first day of the rally, the classic reliability trial reached the city of Liege (France), and the 4x4 adventure drive went a little bit further to the town of Spa.

On Oct. 25 both series visited the motor racing circuits at Spa and Nurburgring before heading on to the ski resort of Kitzbuhel in Austria.

Poor weather on the 24th prevented participants to cross over the Grossglockner mountain pass, and bypassing it into Slovenia, Croatia and an overnight halt in the city of Zaghreb.

From Zaghreb, the route wound its way into Hungary, halting at the town of Baja for lunch, and later moving on into Romania and a night halt in Timisoara.

On Oct. 26 the event ran through southern Romania into the capital Bucharest for a night's rest. The next day it progressed across the border into Bulgaria for two competitive sections before crossing the next border into Turkey and a halt in Istanbul.

At 4 a.m. the next day, the cars started off in their route across Turkey, passing through Ankara to the Cappadocian town of Nevsehir, and the ancient town of Antakya for a night halt.

The rally then headed for the Syrian border and an overnight halt in Damascus.

In Egypt the cars will board an Antonov plane to Kenya, and will travel by land to Cape Town.

Cuba launch defence of world volleyball title

TOKYO (AFP) — All-conquering Cuba launched their defence of the women's title beating the United States in three sets on the opening day of the world volleyball championships on Tuesday.

The Cubans, seeking their sixth straight major title, rallied to a straightforward 15-7, 15-8, 15-10 victory over the Americans in the Group B round robin first stage in Tokuyama, western Japan.

"Our spikes and serves went very well today ... it was the major key to our win. But we still have two matches in this group and will try our best in each match to win the title," said Cuban coach Antonio Perdomo.

"We still have a lot to improve to play better, such as the combination of the setter and attacker, and receiving," he added.

The Cuban women have won the 1991 World Cup, the Barcelona Olympics, the 1994 world championships, the 1995 World Cup and the Atlanta Olympics consecutively to dominate the world.

A total of 16 teams were divided into four groups in the first stage and the top three teams from each group will advance to the next round.

In the other Group B match earlier in the day, Italy outgunned Bulgaria 15-12, 15-10, 15-6.

Russia, losers to Brazil in the bronze medal playoff at the Atlanta Olympic Games, gained sweet revenge by scoring a 15-7, 15-6, 15-11 win over the same opponents in a Group C match in Matsumoto, north of Tokyo.

"I'm satisfied that my players concentrated really well and played a good game. I never want to lose a game. But the championships last 10 days, so we have to keep our strength," said Russian coach Nikolai Karpol.

On Wednesday, the Russians will take on Germany, who narrowly crashed to the Dominican Republic 15-1, 11-15, 6-15, 15-7, 15-17.

Asian silver medallists South Korea edged past European number two Croatia 15-12, 9-15, 15-12, 7-15, 15-11, and Olympic silver medallists China overwhelmed Thailand 15-9, 15-2, 15-5 in Group D in Kagoshima.

In Group A in Tokyo, the Netherlands, losing quarter-finalists at Atlanta, powered past Kenya 15-7, 15-1, 15-6, while hosts Japan downed Peru 15-8, 15-6, 15-3.

Arab Handball Champion Clubs Tournament kicks off today

By Roufan Nahhas

AMMAN — The Arab Handball Champion Clubs Tournament kicks off Wednesday at the Sports Palace with fourteen men's and women's teams taking part.

The Nov. 4-14 event, held under the patronage of HRH Princess Sumaya, and organised by the Jordan Handball Federation (JHF), has attracted wide participtipon but men's titleholders, Egypt's Sporting, in addition to runner-up Egypt's Al Zamalek are absent, paving the way for another team to win the title.

The seven teams participating in the 2nd championship for women include: titleholders Tunisia's Jameyat Al Sahel, Syria's Al Ittihad Al Halabi, Algeria's Mawloudiah, Samouhah and Al Ahli of Egypt and Jordan's champions Hartha and runner-up Al Orhtodoxi.

The women's and men's tournaments will be held on a single round basis as the Asian Handball Federation law specifies.

The seven teams taking part in the 20th men's championship include: Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli, Al Ahli and Al Jazireh of the United Arab Emirates, Egypt's Al Ahli, Qatar's Qatar, Jordan's Al Salt and Al Ahli.

Tournament's director and JHF Secretary Sinan Al Husseini expressed the federation's happiness at hosting this tournament which follows the 1st Asian League Champions Handball Tournament which concluded here recently with five teams taking part.

"The federation feels happy at hosting another tournament in such a short period," Husseini told the Jordan Times.

"This time we have more teams and better players so the benefit will be double for our participating teams," he added.

"We consider this as a second important step in our preparation for the upcoming Pan-Arab Games next summer."

Jordan will take part with two men's teams — Al Ahli — who came second in the Asian championship, and Al Salt.

" We are proud of our teams especially Al Ahli who qualified to the World Cup Handball Championship with Kuwait's Kathema after taking their recent top two finishes."

Meanwhile, the Arab Handball Federation has invited referees from Norway to officiate the matches.

"We thought it is better to have a neutral crew of referees to handle the matches so we will not have any objections or problems," he said.

Hartha Club President Suleiman Obaidat, whose team won the league in 1997 in their first season by upstaging champions Al Orthodoxi, said his team was ready for competition.

"The players has been practicing daily for over a month now and we are sure of our abilities," Obaidat told the Jordan Times.

The club currently has 8 players on the national team.

"We are participating to achieve a position and assess our place among other Arab teams," he added.

"We do not have enough information on most of the participating teams, but this will not stop us from trying to demonstrate that Jordanian women's handball is in good shape," he said.

Schedule of Wednesday's matches

UAE's Al Jazireh vs Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli	5:00 p.m.
Egypt's Al Ahli vs UAE's Al Ahli	6:45 p.m.
Qatar's Qatar vs Jordan's Al Salt	8:15 p.m.

Hakkinen sets sights on retaining title

SUZUKA (R) — Mika Hakkinen hardly changed out of his champagne-soaked overalls at Suzuka race circuit on Sunday before he was vowing to retain the world drivers' championship he claimed in winning the Japanese Grand Prix.

As he and his McLaren team relaxed with a party at the circuit's karaoke bar before flying home for a more serious celebration at their headquarters in Woking, Hakkinen reflected on his past and looked forward to more victories in the future.

"My accident in Adelaide in 1995 changed my life," Hakkinen admitted, referring to the life-threatening crash into the barriers he suffered during practice for the Australian Grand Prix. "I was a different person from that day and I learned a lot. Nothing has been the same since.

"I am more reflective and I think more about everything. I am not so rash. This is a great moment for me, but it is one that I feel I am ready for now.

"As to the future, I am not really thinking much of it now except to say that the team, and me, want to stay as champions.

I want to win back-to-back world championships and I want this to be just the start of a special time again for McLaren."

Hakkinen clinched the title on Sunday when his rival Michael Schumacher suffered a right rear tyre blowout on his Ferrari after 32 laps of the 51-lap race while running third in pursuit of the Finn.

Debris from an earlier accident at the chicane involving two tail-enders was said to have caused Schumacher's high-speed misfortune.

The blowout ended for the Ferrari driver and his team all their hopes, but in reality it was never his day from the time he stalled on the starting grid and was forced to start from the back of it.

"From that moment on, I knew I could win the race and the title more easily," said Hakkinen, after being drenched in champagne by team mate David Coulthard and Ferrari's Eddie Irvine on the victors' podium.

"It was a great release. I never had any doubts, but I am not a person who takes anything for granted and I did not this weekend. I was worried about so many things, but Keke Rosberg told me to stop it. He was here for Finnish television and I was delighted for him as much as me.

"The team were fantastic for me. It all goes back to when I had my shunt at Adelaide in '95. I will never forget that time, the bad times and the support they gave me... That weekend in Adelaide changed my life. Nothing was ever the same again."

Schumacher made a dignified exit despite his disappointment. "We did not lose the championship here today, but in the first six races when we were never competitive enough," he said.

"Next season, we have to do better straightaway. We cannot afford to waste any time."

As if to press home that point, the 29-year-old German was scheduled to be one of the many drivers staying on for a special tyre-testing session organised by Bridgestone at Suzuka this week. The Japanese company will be the sole supplier of tyres in 1999 following Goodyear's withdrawal after Sunday's final race.

Hakkinen's team-mate Briton David Coulthard is also staying and he, like Schumacher, aims to topple Hakkinen from the champion's perch as soon as he can.

"That is my aim for next year," he said. "This was Mika's year and I want to make sure 1999 is mine."

for Rusedski keeps his hopes alive



Nicolas Kiefer

PARIS (AFP) — Britain's Greg Rusedski, who has to reach the final at the Paris Indoor Open this week to stand any chance of qualifying for the ATP Championships in Hanover, made a whirlwind start at the $2,550,000 event here on Tuesday when he outplayed Germany's Nicolas Kiefer in straight-sets.

The 13th-seeded left-hander, who packs the world's fastest serve, scored an impressive 6-3, 6-4 victory in just 67 minutes in front of a few hundred spectators packed around the adjoining number-one court inside the Bercy Stadium complex.

He now plays either fourth-seeded Spaniard Carlos Moya or Jason Stoltenberg of Australia for a place in the quarter-finals.

While Rusedski was romping home, home hope Cedric Pioline was crashing to a humiliating first-round defeat on the centre-court.

The 29-year-old Frenchman, who has slumped to 17th in the rankings and who has won only two matches in his last four tournaments, went down 4-6, 4-6 to 47th-ranked American Vincent Spadea.

Spadea now plays 15th seeded Dutch player Jan Siemerink.

Qualifier Arnaud Clement was another French casualty. He was beaten 6-7 (5/7), 3-6 by Magnus Norman of Sweden who now takes on eighth-seeded Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov.

French wild-card Jerome Golmard kept the flag flying, however. He survived late match jitters to defeat out-of-touch Byron Black of Zimbabwe 7-6 (7/2), 6-4. He now plays 16th seed Albert Costa of Spain.

China looking Asian gold in taekwondo

BEIJING (AP) — China hopes to win its first Asian Games gold in the kick-fighting martial art of taekwondo in the games next month in Thailand, the official China Sports Daily newspaper said Tuesday.

The team of six women and three men will be China's first to compete in taekwondo at the Asian Games, the report said.

China only began developing taekwondo in 1995, a year after the last Asian Games, the newspaper said.

China picked up one silver and one bronze medal at the 1997 world championships and won a gold, silver and five bronze medals at the Asian championships this year, the report said.

With South Korea, Taiwan and Iran — the strongest taekwondo nations — all competing in the upcoming games, "the Chinese team's goal is to go all out to win one gold medal," it said.

Head coach Chen Liren was quoted as saying that a recent decision by the sports' international federation to adjust weight categories for competitions would affect China's women.

The team would not be dominant at any weight, he said.

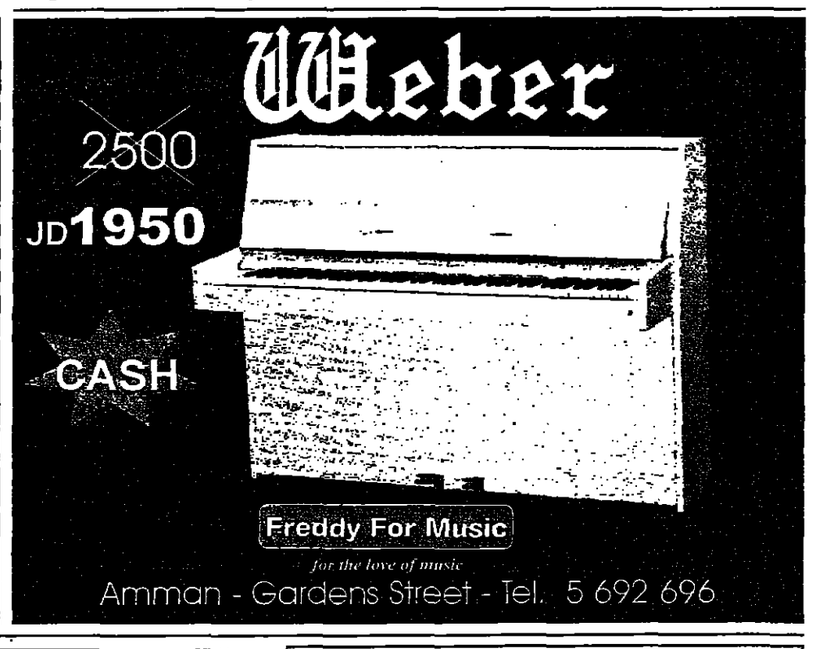
Meanwhile, China's Wu Yanyan, world record-holder for the women's 200 metre medley, warned Tuesday she did not expect to do well in next month's Asian Games.

The 20-year-old, who resumed training in July after a six-month physical and mental rehabilitation, said it would be impossible for her to fully recover her best levels before the Bangkok Games, which open on December 6.

Wu set a world record of 2:09.72 in the 200 metre medley in the October 1997 China National Games.

In the World Championships in Perth in January, Wu won the 200 metre medley with a meet record of 2:10.88.

JORDAN TIMES FAX: 5696183



GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH

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DUCK SOUP

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ A J 10 4
♡ Q 10 5
◇ A 9 6
♣ 7 5 2

WEST
♠ K 9 3
♡ 2
◇ Q 7 4
♣ K Q 9 6 4 3

EAST
♠ Q 8 7 6 5
♡ A 9 8 6
◇ J 5
♣ J 10

SOUTH
♠ 2
♡ K J 7 4 3
◇ K 10 8 3 2
♣ A 8

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♡	Pass	1♠	Pass
2◇	Pass	4♡	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening lead: King of ♠

Don't neglect even the slightest extra chance. You never know when a line that is superior by a mere 1 percent can make the difference.

North's jump to game was only a slight stretch. The two aces and double fit enhance the value of the hand considerably, although the balanced distribution is a flaw.

West led the king of clubs, taken in the closed hand with the ace as East started an echo by following with the jack. A trump to the queen lost to the ace, the ten of clubs was returned and overtaken with the queen and the nine of clubs forced declarer to ruff as East signalled with the eight of spades.

A trump to the ten revealed the unlucky trump break. Declarer tried ace, king and another diamond but West, in with the queen, simply gave declarer a ruff-sluff by persevering with a club.

Declarer was ruined. Since ruffing in hand would leave East with a long trump, declarer was forced to ruff in dummy. But East simply discarded a spade, and declarer had no way back to hand to draw East's trumps. Down one.

It was suggested that, instead of cashing the high diamonds, declarer should simply duck a diamond. West can counter by winning and playing another club, allowing East to discard a diamond and again locking declarer in dummy.

The winning line is far more simple. Declarer should simply refuse to win the first trick and, since West started with six clubs, all is well. After winning the club continuation, declarer forces out the ace of hearts and East has no way to disturb declarer's trump holding!

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THE IRBID District Electricity Company (IDECO) announces the availability of tender documents for Tender No. 25/98 *turnkey contract, full design, engineering, manufacture,* testing at factory, transportation, full supervision of erection and guarantee for the Irbid West Substation 33/11kv which consists of 33/11kv prefabricated containerized substation contains 33kv metalclad switchgear, 11kv metalclad switchgear, control and protection and auxiliary equipment, 15 MVA 33/11kv transformer complete with civil works.

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In case the tenderer requires the tender documents to be sent to him by mail, the express airmail cost will be added.

Bids are to be submitted to the Secretary of Tendering Committee at the above address not later than 12:00 noon local time on Saturday 9/1/1999 accompanied with a tender bond for a sum equal to 5 per cent of the total tender price.

Arafat saves Netanyahu government — reports

TEL AVIV (AFP) — In an extraordinary intervention in Israeli politics, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat saved Benyamin Netanyahu's government from ouster by asking Arab Israeli deputies to abstain in a key vote in parliament, media reports said Tuesday.

Netanyahu had made the vote Monday on the government's 1999 budget a question of confidence, meaning defeat would have toppled his ruling coalition and forced new elections.

He was saved from ouster by four deputies from the opposition United Arab List, who abstained from the vote, reportedly at Arafat's request.

Israel public radio and the Yediot Aharonot newspaper said Arafat intervened to avoid the fall of Netanyahu's government and a subsequent delay in implementation of the latest Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement.

The agreement is supposed to lead to further Israeli withdrawals from the West Bank and implementation of other, long-overdue steps expanding Palestinian autonomy.

One of the Arab-Israeli deputies, Tawfiq Khatib, confirmed to AFP that they had met with Arafat on Friday but denied the Palestinian leader asked them to vote with the Netanyahu government.

"We had already announced last month that we would back the government for a limited time if it signed the Wye River accord," Khatib said, referring to the peace accord signed Oct. 23 in Washington.

"Arafat never referred to the parliamentary vote" during the Friday meeting, he said.

Israeli media, however, said Arafat asked the Arab deputies not to join moves to topple Netanyahu before his government had carried out the West Bank withdrawals required under the accord.

The budget was eventually passed in its first reading by a vote of 54 to 53 in the 120-member Knesset. If the Arab deputies had voted with the opposition as usual rather than abstained, the government would have fallen.

It was an uncomfortable victory for Netanyahu, who as opposition leader lambasted the previous Labour governments for relying on support from deputies representing Israel's Arab minority to gain parliamentary approval of the Oslo peace agreements with the Palestinians.

Netanyahu and other right-wing politicians wanted all issues of "national interest" to be decided only by Jewish deputies.

In the same vein, Netanyahu's office issued a statement following Monday's vote reaffirming that "the government will not rely on the votes of deputies from non-Zionist formations on national and defence issues."

Abdul Wahab Darawsheh, one of the Arab Israeli deputies, protested the statement.

"If the prime minister does not apologise to the Arab deputies who backed him on Monday, we will punish the government in the next vote," Darawsheh said in a radio interview.

The Knesset is due next week to vote on a resolution calling for the dissolution of parliament and the holding of elections early next year.

The bill was approved in committee last month with the support of members of Netanyahu's fragile coalition government.

To become law, it must receive the backing of an absolute majority of 61 deputies in three successive readings.

The next general election are not scheduled to be held until the year 2000.



A female Israeli border guard leads away two female Peace Now demonstrators who tried to stop a machine from working on Tuesday at the disputed Ras Al Amoud site in Arab east Jerusalem, where Jewish settlers are trying to create a new enclave (AFP photo)

Jewish settlers stake West Bank land ahead of Israeli withdrawal

By Jack Katzenell
AP

ALON SHVUT — Two young religious Jews wearing knitted skullcaps poured over Jewish texts in a new West Bank trailer park Tuesday, while a third man, armed with a submachine gun, stood guard outside.

The mobile homes were brought illegally on Saturday night to the rocky hilltop outside the existing settlement of Alon Shvut and several similar trailer parks have sprouted on other West Bank hilltops in what appears to be a last-minute land grab.

Settlers say they want to claim the plots before Israel hands a chunk of the West Bank to the Palestinians as part of a new Mideast land-for-peace accord.

Under the Wye summit agreement, Israel is to withdraw its troops from 13 per cent of the West Bank and hand the area over to Palestinian control.

Settlers and religious Jews, like the young men who turned their trailer into a study hall, believe the West Bank is part of the biblical land of Israel promised to the Jews by God.

Hoping to set their presence in stone, settlers have turned to tactics which have worked in the past: they placed mobile homes on hills they plan to turn into larger permanent settlements which would be difficult for Israel to remove in the face of a larger West Bank withdrawal.

Sitting in his office stacked with maps and plans, Yerach Rotem, a community official for Alon Shvut, said he was sorry the mobile homes had to be erected illegally instead of with government approval. Rotem hasn't seen the withdrawal maps and doesn't know which areas will be affected in the pullback, "but with this agreement ... we were afraid that all our work would just go down the drain," he said.

"We are worried," Rotem said, and he is not alone.

Literally overnight, over 10 mobile homes popped-up, forming small beige clusters on the very top of dusty dry hills.

Three homes appeared on an isolated hilltop outside the settlement of Maale Michmash, in the heartland of the West Bank.

The very steep hill, about 700 meters from the settlement, commands a magnificent view of the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea to the east, and the eastern suburbs of Jerusalem to the west.

Israel occupied the West Bank in 1967 war and today some 150,000 Israeli Jews live in settlements throughout the area. The Palestinians want the land as part of a future independent state, for the 1.6 million Palestinians who also live in the West Bank in eight cities and hundreds of villages.

Yitzhak Sapir, 53, a lecturer at a community college in one of the West Bank settlements, was looking after the three trailers while the other settlers — three families and some young single people — were absent at work.

Despite repeated calls by the Palestinians and the United States to halt settlement construction, Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu has said he would allow settlements to expand, in order to accommodate natural growth.

Sapir, however, was not in need of a home. He already has one on another West Bank settlement. He has moved into the trailer "partly as a protest," he said, against the new peace agreement. "Our physical presence here gives a feeling of greater security and permanence," he said.

Sapir had already decorated the walls of his trailer with framed photographs of orchids and West Bank landscapes. Lace curtains had been hung on the window-frames. "It's my wife," he said. "She tries to create the atmosphere of a home no matter how rough it is."

At Alon Shvut and Maale Michmash, Israeli police ordered the settlers to remove mechanical diggers which were levelling the ground, but made no attempt to evict the settlers.

Senior Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said the presence of the new mobile homes were "a flagrant violation" of the Wye Plantation accord.

"He can't have both settlements and peace," Erekat said.

'More than 300 supporters have been arrested'

GAZA CITY (AP) — More than 300 suspected Islamists have been arrested by Palestinian police since last week's suicide attack on an Israeli convoy, a leader of Islamist group said Tuesday.

Over the weekend, Palestinian security forces said they had rounded up more than 100 followers of the Hamas and Islamic Jihad groups, but have refused to update the figure.

Ismail Hanieh, a Hamas leader, said that more than 300 activists have been arrested since last Thursday's bombing in which an Israeli soldier and the assailant, a 19-year-old Hamas activist from the Gaza Strip refugee camp of Jebaliya, were killed.

Hanieh was among those rounded up, but was released after several days. On Tuesday, the spokesman of Hamas, Mahmoud Zahar, was also freed, Palestinian security officials said.

Iran recalls envoy from Prague

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran on Tuesday announced that it was recalling its ambassador from the Czech Republic over the launch of broadcasts in Persian by the Prague-based Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL).

Tehran has decided "to downgrade its political and economic relations with the Czech Republic to protest against the launch" Friday of the U.S.-funded broadcasts, Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi said.

"Iran has recalled its ambassador from Prague and no new economic contract will be signed with the Czech Republic," he told Iranian radio and television.

He said Prague's failure to heed repeated representations about the broadcasts had left Tehran with little choice.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran had been trying to convince Czech officials through different measures and objections to prevent such Satanic measures against the Iranian people," he said.

"But in the end the Satanic voice went on the air through the cooperation of Czech officials."

Washington is routinely referred to as the "Great Satan" in political rhetoric in Tehran.

The new U.S.-funded Farsi (Persian) Language Service, whose programmes are produced at RFE/RL's studios in Prague, made its first half-hour broadcast Friday.

Vast majority of Israeli Jews back Wye accord — poll

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Jews overwhelmingly support the Wye River peace agreement with the Palestinians, according to a poll published Tuesday.

Seventy per cent of the respondents said they back the land-for-security accord concluded last month while 24 per cent said they opposed it, according to the Modiin Mizrahi institute poll on behalf of Tel Aviv university's centre for peace research.

The remaining six per cent did not express an opinion.

The poll of Israeli Jews living in Israeli and in the West Bank and Gaza Strip found a close link between levels of religious observance and support for the accord.

Seventy six per cent of the Israeli Jews supporting the agreement described themselves as secular, while only 33 per cent of the backers said they were ultra-orthodox.

Eighty-five per cent of those who expressed support for the accord described themselves as Labour Party voters. Among supporters of Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu's right-wing Likud Party, 60 per cent backed the Wye River accord.

The poll of 506 Israeli Jews taken at the end of October had a margin of error of 4.5 per cent.

The accord provides for an Israeli military withdrawal from another 13 per cent of the West Bank in return for tougher Palestinian measures against anti-Israeli violence.

Israel navy seizes Lebanese fishermen for four hours

TYRE (AFP) — Israeli navy gunboats seized on Tuesday three Lebanese fishermen for three hours after firing machine guns at several fishing boats off the southern Lebanese coast, the police said.

The Israelis fired heavy machine guns at dawn at six small boats carrying 13 Lebanese fishermen off the southern port city of Tyre, the police said.

One of the boats, was riddled with bullets and was sinking, but the two fishermen on board, brothers Khalil and Abbas Daramsis, got it back to shore, they said.

The Israeli gunboats seized two fishing boats and interrogated three fishermen in the boats for four hours before ordering them to return to Tyre, they said.

Mohammad Bawwab, president of the 550-member Tyre fishermen's union, identified the three fishermen as Ali Amin, 25, Mohammad Badawi, 28, and his brother Ibrahim Badawi, 23.

Bawwab told AFP that the men were interrogated by Israeli navy officers on Tyre port activities as well as on anti-Israeli guerrilla groups, particularly the Shiite Muslim activist Hizbollah.

The Israeli navy has repeatedly imposed a sea blockade on the Tyre region and continues to stop fishermen from sailing more than a mile off south Lebanon's shores to prevent attack on northern Israel from the sea.

Saddam's envoy fails to convince Barzan to return to Iraq

CAIRO (AP) — A cousin of Saddam Hussein has failed to convince the Iraqi leader's half-brother in Switzerland to return home instead of going into exile, Iraqi dissidents said Tuesday.

Barzan Al Tikriti, who headed Iraq's mission at the United Nations in Geneva for 10 years, failed to be persuaded by guarantees of his safety offered by Saddam, the dissidents said.

Al Tikriti was among 30 Iraqi ambassadors and other diplomats recalled to Baghdad over the summer in a major diplomatic reshuffle. Al Tikriti refused to return saying he wanted to stay abroad for family reasons.

Last month, President Saddam's cousin, Gen. Mizahem Saab Al Hassan, met with Al Tikriti in Geneva and conveyed a message that his decision to go into exile is harming the Iraqi regime's image, said the dissidents.

They spoke on condition they were not identified further.

Al Hassan, a former commander of the Iraqi air force, also conveyed a message from President Saddam's eldest son, Udai, warning Al Tikriti to refrain from hostile acts while in exile or making statements critical to the regime, said the dissidents.

The Swiss government said Al Tikriti has until the end of November to leave Geneva under Swiss laws that allow U.N. diplomats to stay on in Switzerland for three months after the end of their tenure.

Al Tikriti's four children are believed to have Swiss citizenship but it is not clear if he will apply to stay in Switzerland. His wife is believed to be undergoing cancer treatment in New York.

On Friday, he told the London-based Al Arab newspaper that he had some personal problems with his brother's government although he denied political dissension. "For 15 years I have had enough sufferings which could have not been tolerated by others. This was done unjustly," Al Tikriti said without elaborating.

He said he has no plans to join the Iraqi opposition groups in exile although he called for political reform in Iraq.

Twenty years in exile: Iranian empress dreams of going home

BEIRUT (AP) — The shah's widow, Empress Farah, says she dreams about returning to Iran after 20 years in exile.

Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and Farah left Iran on Jan. 16, 1979, as riots engulfed the country. Soon after, the revolution brought to power the Islamic Republic and the royal couple never returned.

Farah, who lives in France, was asked in a rare television interview Monday night about the return that has so far eluded her.

Eyes brimming with tears, the 60-year-old empress spoke about an incident in which she accidentally tasted grains of Iranian soil stuck to dried fruit brought from her country.

"I hope that I can be able to cross the border and see the mountains of Iran," she said. "Then I think I will kiss the ground."

The Iranian government has long asked that the royal family's wealth be returned and that some of its members be tried in court. In recent years, the demands have subsided, but the return of any Pahlavis who still claim the throne remains out of the question.

Farah remains bitter at political friends who she says abandoned the pro-Western Pahlavis during the revolution.

"The world is cruel to the losers," she said in the three-hour interview on the private Murr TV station.

Until his death of cancer in Egypt in 1980, the shah and his family sought refuge in several countries, including the United States. But the list quickly shrunk as Iran's new regime pressured host countries and threatened to kill the royal couple.

Perhaps the most prominent part of the journey in exile was the shah's cancer treatment in the United States. That stop precipitated in angry students occupying the U.S. embassy in Tehran on Nov. 4, 1979, and taking 52 Americans hostage for 444 days.



Michael's latest video focuses on arrest

NEW YORK (AP) — George Michael dresses as a cop in a new video that makes light of his arrest last spring in a park bathroom. The video for the song "Outside" opens with a soft-porn parody, then switches to Hollywood as police in helicopters descend on couples performing sex acts in public places, USA Today said Monday. There's a brief re-enactment of Michael's arrest April 7, with a public restroom that morphs into a disco. The British pop star pleaded no contest to committing a lewd act in a public bathroom, paid a $810 fine and was ordered to undergo counselling.

Prostitute wants her whips and chains back

DOYLESTOWN (AP) — "Mistress Donna" wants her sex toys back. When police raided Donna Gorton's suburban Philadelphia home, they seized the usual tools of the S-and-M trade — whips, chains, shackles, a dunce cap, potty chairs and a can of shortening. Gorton, who pleaded guilty last month to prostitution, says she has an emotional attachment to the gear. District Attorney Alan Rubenstein said he will return the stuff, provided Gorton not use any of the items for prostitution.

Whaler barred from visiting Keiko

OSLO (AP) — A whale-hunter who says Keiko the Hollywood whale should be ground into hamburger was turned away when he tried to meet his enemy at a holding pen in Iceland. Norway's most outspoken whaler, Steinar Bastesen, can't stand Keiko or the 1993 "Free Willy" movie the whale starred in. Bastesen says the hubbub about the movie and returning Keiko to the wild unfairly stacks public opinion against whale hunting. "He would have been more suited as hamburger on a plate," the Norwegian news agency NTB quoted him as saying on Tuesday.

Ronaldo's fiancee fulfills teenage dream

OPORTO (AP) — The fashion model fiancee of Brazilian soccer star Ronaldo has fulfilled a teenage dream by sharing the catwalk with Canadian supermodel Linda Evangelista. "I've admired Linda, Claudia Schiffer and Cindy Crawford ever since I started modelling at 14. I never thought I'd be in a fashion show with one of them," Susana Werner, 21, told reporters late Sunday in this northern city. The Brazilian model admitted that having a superstar boyfriend had helped her career. "My career turned international after I started dating Ronaldo," she said.

Mount Athos marks 1000 anniversary

MOUNT ATHOS (AP) — Rare icons and other religious objects will be on permanent exhibit at the first museum on Mount Athos, the all-male Christian Orthodox enclave in northern Greece. The exhibit was inaugurated last week in ceremonies to mark the 1,000-year anniversary of the Mount Athos community, where women and most female animals are banned, the Macedonian Press Agency reported Monday. The objects displayed at the Xenophon monastery were part of an exhibition opened last year in Salonica. Other items, including Byzantine coins, are expected to be added to the museum collection later, the agency reported.

Jewish settlers ex settlement

...LHAFEZ (AFP) — Jewish settlers ...ove Wednesday as part of an exp... ...of the West Bank town of Hi... ...woman said. The mobile homes we... ...ish residents of Avve Hafez recen... ...ession to expand their settlement. ...y said. "This is not a new set... ...said. He said the settlers could build ...ompliance of the mobile homes if the ...Minister Benyamin Netanyahu h... ...new settlements in occupied te... ...ern Arab east Jerusalem, which ...ipated capital. But he has repeatedl... ...Palestinian protests Israel's right ...account for "natural growth" o...

...ume 24 Number 6987

Govern... ...V char...

...By Alia A. Toukan

...RAM — The governi... ...on Wednesday closed the Amman office of ybia-based satellite TV al Jazirah and sum... ...of the Qatari ambas... ...in protest against gime attacking the Iam and its regime country does not will not accept slander...

...Minister Fayez each told reporters fol... ...a closed meeting bers of the Lower of Parliament yester... ...where discussion of the Jazirah programme fig... ...high on the agenda. ...ding to a lawmaker ...

...ordan's programme on Jazirah, called "Al-Itijah Jadeed," (the opposite direction), originally set to mark the fourth anniver... ...of the Jordanian-Israeli treaty, turned into Jordanian viewers asked a "Jordan bash... ...by anchorman Fays... ...Ajram and one of his guests, researcher Mohammad Khalifah, both Arabs as well as viewers ...

Israel demanc...

...TEL AVIV (AFP) — The Jordan on Wednesday and U.S. and Israel... ...ready to submit "clarifica... ...to their security plan to the Palestinian extremists has given to the United as part of the Wye River anti-security agreement. ...He will not submit any clarifications to any of the points in the security plan." ...Chief of Palestinian intelli... ...Tawfiq in the Gaza Strip, ...Mohammad Dahlan, told ...

...Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin ...Netanyahu said he would not ask his cabinet to approve the agreement until the Palestinian com... ...plies with its wording.

...Netanyahu's aides said the ...Israeli minister was waiting to talk about how and when Palestinian President ...Yasser Arafat's security forces will begin to capture and detain 30 Palestinians ...suspected of involvement in ...terrorist attacks.

...The United States is expect... ...to provide a written guar... ...for the arrest of the 30 in question Wednesday, ...Israeli daily Yediot ...Aharonot said.

...To convince the cabinet what was agreed on in will be complete," ...Dahlan told Israel Radio. ..."There are no new demands the Palestinians. The decision to receive the clarifications in writing is not to be stressed.

...Dahlan, who was one of the original Palestinian negotia... ...at the Wye River, said: "In the [Wye River] accord, as in fact, there is nothing called (a list of 30) people." ...We have presented our views to the Americans, as well. Israel has nothing to lose. We shared our plan with the Americans and received a positive response."

...Netanyahu added that Israeli security forces chief Shaul Mofaz and Ami Ayalon, head of Shin Bet internal security force, had also found Arafat's security proposal satisfac...

...Meanwhile, Yediot Aharonot said Mofaz and Shin Bet chief had urged Netanyahu to postpone the cabinet meeting because the Palestinian plan is not tough enough.

...The Palestinian plan to